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THE

SORCERER:

A TALE.

FROM THE GERMAN

OF

VEIT WEBER.

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Yankee Doodle Dandy

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THE
S O R C E R E R :

A TALE.

IN the golden age of monkish sway over the wills and understandings of men; when the cowled head was the only repository of the secrets of Omniscience; when the glance of a laic behind the curtain of nature was high treason against God, and all his knowledge was accounted contraband, and derived from the Devil; when to think was impiety; when science led to the pillory, and wisdom to the stake; there lived in Salerno, tranquil and happy in the culti-

vation of literature, Pietro Barliardo, occupied in liberal studies in an age that constrained Galileo to abjure the convictions of his reason, that brought Savonarola to the flames, and consigned John Faustus to the Devil, for their generous efforts to enlighten their ignorant contemporaries. A century, that had risen and flourished under the eye of Barliardo, hastened to decay: it had enriched him with experience and the materials of wisdom, and study had taught him to employ them. Aware of the nobler uses of science, he applied his attainments to no purposes of idle parade: to rival the clergy in the arts, which it had impropriated and set it's landmarks on; to boast, that he traced nature in her most secret excursions, and

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was a confidant of her most clandestine transactions, made no part of his plan: he professed, but to inculcate into the mind of youth civil and classical erudition; and this the monks did not consider as an encroachment on their patent, but, while they were left the uncontested conduits of divine truth, allowed him to be resorted to as a reservoir of profane and pagan literature.

Secret as the councils of conspirators or the debaucheries of hypocrites, were the researches of Barliardo into the mysteries of magic; for not content with the arts that govern men, he wished to push his conquests into other regions, and bend superior beings to his will. Yet so guarded were all his measures, that eagle-eyed suspicion was foiled, and

vigilance in vain lay in watch for him; though his green and sound old age, vigorous and unimpaired at ninety-five, gave the alarm to invidious observation; and unless Lucifer were his physician, and had been feed with the reversion of Pietro's soul, it seemed impossible, that at an age when his vital sap should have been exhausted, the honours of his head withered and decayed, and death should have visibly meditated the fatal blow, that the old man could retain the freshness of juvenile vigour: so reasoned the monks, and such reasoning became them. Their emissaries mingled with his pupils; but without extracting any matter for their malice, and without any other consequence, than inducing Pietro to renounce the instruction of youth, to
which

which he imputed the jealousy of the clergy, that he might not provoke their envy to more effectual measures, and lose the consolation of returning to dust in consecrated ground. He resolved to devote the last chapter of his life, to the education of an orphan nephew, whom fate sufficiently called on him to protect, by depriving the child of every other friend. Him he adopted as his son, declared the heir to all his estates, and laboured to enrich with probity, and adorn with literature: he secluded himself from all commerce with the world: books of astrology and magic, his nephew Benedetto, and a poor cousin, by name Francesco, whom he had taken into the house as a playmate and superintendant for the former, composed his whole society.

The child alone cropt the joys of the passing moment; the harvest of the old man and of Francesco, lived but in expectation. Though the latter found in the house of Barliardo every necessary, and many conveniences, his young heart panting for freedom, would have spurned these advantages for a wider range of liberty, had not a fair neighbour, the daughter of a decayed and disabled sculptor, overbalanced the chagrin he endured from the peevishness of the old man, and the tediousness he felt in the insipid amusements of the child. No sooner had Benedetto wearied himself with his sports, no sooner had Barliardo immured himself in his library, to acquaint himself in books with beings whom he dreaded to invoke; than Fran-

cesco stole to Enemonde, and raised
with kisses on the lips of his enamoured
girl, a more blissful spirit than ever ne-
cromancy, with all its dread incantations,
has conjured up.

This gentle sprite was no less than
the gay god of love; who esteems magic
circles of crucifixes, deaths heads, shin
bones, and swords, no more than the
burning torrents of Vesuvius do the re-
liquies of St. Januarius, or than Oba-
diah's coach-horse did the sign of the
cross: who creeps through the grates of
convents, mocks the precautions of
monks, and forces his way to the human
heart, through every human sense: that
god, who though a child, is absolute
over men; who, though himself blind,
is the surest of guides; and to whom,

though he has no longer altars in any church, all the world bows the knee. When Francesco lay in the magic circle of Enemonde's arms, and murmured the invocation of love, the spirit freely laid itself open to his demands, solved his doubts, confirmed his hopes, and predicted by its interpreter prattling hope, the youth's entire destiny. Love had soon revealed all his secrets, and for further information, referred the inquirer to the spirit of marriage ; and this the amorous boy was eager enough to invoke. Still within the propitious circle, with sighs, pressures of the hand, melting looks, rapturous smiles, with fond complaints, tender expostulations, with transports of rage, jealousy and despair, the impassioned boy besought the connubial power

to initiate him in the most precious of mysteries: a secret more valuable than any contained in the obelisks of Egypt, and which had alchymists ever tasted, they would have sought no further for the philosophers stone. Could Francesco have obtained this, he would have dug through solid fire, swum through liquid, have made Bonzes' and Bramins' penances appear the probations of children, have bound his tongue in eternal silence, and have subscribed to the most dreadful law that ancient or modern Dracos have enacted; he would have renounced his reason, received the writings of priests as the word of God, and submitted his faith to the guidance of hoary ignorance, and inveterate error. But of this scope all his shafts fell short;

his

his forces, which had carried him through all the former stages, failed him in the last. He erected altars among the fragrant myrtles, under the thick shade of the broad platane and the gigantick larch: he prayed in the cool of eve, beside the rippling rill, that changed its murmurs into prayers for him: he animated the silent and stagnant noon, with his entreaties and complaints: in vain were all; the spirit of marriage remained inexorable.

When Francesco had essayed every incense, had exhausted every form of imprecation without effect, he at last asked his Enemonde; why she denied her hand to him, to whom she had so freely given her heart?

Enemonde.

Enemonde. Because I cannot bring thee
bags of gold, to perpetuate the lustre of
my charms, and to preserve the cheek,
which thou now fondly thinkest so smooth
and vermeil, smooth and vermeil still.

Francesco. Enemonde ?

Enemonde. Save words for strangers :
I read thy answer in the indignant
flashes of thy eye, and the reproachful
swell of thy lip. Well I know, that not
the charms of person alone, with which,
on the credit of three witnesses, my lover,
my glass, and my vanity, I believe na-
ture has endowed me, have retained thy
spirited heart in subjection to my ca-
price ; but I am certain also that the im-
petuous, impassioned Francesco, has not
chosen me for the object of his love, be-
cause my features are seldom distorted
by

by passion, and my heart is never the seat of malignity. Sure am I, that my Francesco would not desert me, would not make my nuptial bed a bier, because a withering fever had blenched my cheeks, or swept the tresses from my head; but I am too certain that his infatiate eyes would no longer dwell with rapture on my countenance, should fallow sickness ingrain my now florid cheeks with her morbid hue. Believe me, loved youth, sensual desire finds the materials for every passion, however fancy may colour them: dress and adorn it as you will, the substance remains the same.—Let me speak out, Francesco, you shall find I have anticipated your answer.

We girls too, are tyrannised by our senses, and seldom has reason a veto against

against their resolves. A shrivelled skeleton, worn with care, consumed by disease, and broken by calamities and afflictions ; a living corps dry as a mummy, and shadowy as an apparition, looking woe, and breathing pestilence, though it should teem with the virtues of saints, and were to plead with the tongue of angels, would never move us to desire. Blooming youth, delicate beauty, and sparkling vivacity, are the allurements of women : strength, courage and gaiety, the attractions of men. The chains, by which we hold you, time soon wears through : the cement, which binds us to you, time hardens and confirms. Your empire over us, is founded on the need the feeble labour under of protection ; our power over you, is the child of curiosity
and

and desire : when the parents die, whence must the helpless infant derive sustenance. Your sex, in the confidence of its strength, shakes off the light incumbrance without difficulty : nay your chains fall from you of themselves. You grow callous and indifferent to our caresses, you consider our tenderness as a duty, and seldom is duty rewarded with gratitude and love. You have enacted the laws of constancy and fidelity, and like legislators exempt yourselves from the observance of them. In fine, while you wander free as the wind, we languish in slavery : judge then if it behoves me not, to submit to the yoke of marriage with caution.

**Francesco.* Deep observations, Enemonde ; but still only the preface to thy discourse.

Enemonde.

Enemonde. Do not mock me, *Francesco*, I speak what the good spirit of love inspires me with.

Francesco. Good spirits inspire good meanings, and is not a refusal of thy hand the substance of all this eloquence? Riches, you give me to understand, make the happy husband. Ah why did I not place my affections on the image of our Lady of Loretto! riches that has in plenty. The wooden doll glittering with gold and gems, would soften into life beneath my impassioned clasp, and become a panting bride: the lifeless lips would melt with my ardent kisses, and wake to sensibility and animation.

Enemonde. Why wilt thou mistake me? Once we needed not the interpretation of language to communicate our most secret thoughts;

thoughts; now language is insufficient to render us intelligible. Thou art a man like others of thy race, and the exceptions among you, are formed but for the cell and the hermitage. Your changes are more frequent than the moon's or the tide's; you are more inconstant than the weather; 'tis less difficult to chain the air than to confine your affections. Shall I not dread then to lose thy love? I also am a woman, and the differences among us fit their subjects but for the hospital and cloister. The headlong propensity to love, the pungent rage to be loved, employ all our wishes and efforts, inspire all our arts, and teach us all our graces: these idols of the sex are equally adored by the prude and the coquet, the girl and the woman: the rites different, but the

the devotion the same. Impelled and directed by these, we vary the dress and the manners, allure you with kindness, tantalise you with coyness, and retain you by jealousy. For you, mirrors of your tastes, we are gay, sad, tender, sprightly, reserved or open. To your approbations all our actions are addressed: for you the small footed nymph wears the scant vestment; for you the taper arm is left exposed, and the snowy bosom bares its opening rosebuds to the rude breezes; for you the luxuriant tresses float unconfined, the vocal melody is cultivated, and the laughing dimple embellishes the peachy cheek. All for love, is the device of woman: we fly you, that you may pursue; with the breath of affected indifference we inflame your ardour;

dour; we deny, that you may not perceive how eagerly we bestow, lest you should despise the favour for its cheapness; we frown at your amorous thefts, to conceal our joy and inability to withhold what you have thought to ravish. We all labour to accelerate the golden period of our lives, the blissful era of love: even the growing girl, yet unripe for the embrace of man, seeks to hide her immaturity, and anticipate pubescence; we all strive to protract the precious season, spite of age, infirmities and wrinkles, and flutter on the precincts of it, like a recently departed spirit, round the loved regions of life. The woman who does not own this, disguises her feelings, which all declare, that with love the first light gushes upon her soul. Thou, I own,
loved

loved Francesco ! art my sun, my god,
the better creator of my life and happiness.

Francesco. Maiden, why delude me
with empty caresses ? To what end
cover with cloth of gold, the block on
which thou behead'st me ? Why crown
me with flowers, but to immolate me ?

Enemonde. Immolate thee ? Injurious
Francesco---I live but in thy love : how
then can I consent to destroy thy passion
by a marriage, contracted in poverty,
and consummated in distress ?

Francesco. Is that all, Enemonde ? that
the mighty Alps that separates us ? How
easily removed ! crown me with the con-
senting kiss, divine girl, thou art my bride
to-morrow. Have I not strength to la-
bour ? hast not thou spirit to assist me ?

Enemonde. I have not spirit to assist thee, when I think that every effort robs me of a portion of my charms, and of what alone renders my charms valuable--thy love. When labour has worn the polish from my now smooth limbs, when burning suns have shrivelled and embrowned my silky skin, and penury has dried the shining moisture of my eyes, with what transports, loved Francesco, wilt thou behold me? or say, when a long day's toils has laid a load of sleep on thy drooping eyelids, when scarcely can a full night refresh thy weary limbs, and replenish thy drained juices, what leisure wilt thou find for love? I too have dreamt delightful visions of hymeneal bliss, have fancied it would convert toil into amusement, sow the barren

waste

waste of penury with roses, and render it a land flowing with milk and honey. I conceived that in the bosom of my beloved, the gathered rain must be taste-
ful as the nectareous juice of Falernian vineyards ; the hardest crust more deli-
cious than the high seasoned viands of luxury. I thought that the endearments of a loved consort could banish distress, his smiles dissipate affliction, spread down on the bare earth, and transmute a cot into a palace.

Francesco. And hast thou abandoned a belief to which I cling as to my hopes of Paradise ?

Enemonde. I have relinquished an opinion, of the error of which I had full demonstation, and thou will loose the dear delusion, when thou shalt have viewed

the proofs I can produce to thee of its falsehood. Let us proceed to yon hut and repose ourselves: the cool breath of eve begins to revive the fainting herbage, and Vittorio, its tenant, will soon return with the miserable earnings of his daily toils. From him I have learnt how fastidious love abhors the habitation of poverty. See! here comes his wife---who would recognise in her meagre, squalid form, the fair Rosabel, who, two short years agone, was the delight of your sex, and the envy of her own.

Francesco. - O vanity, vanity! when thou founded'st thy throne in the female heart, thou but took'st possession of thy birthright. Deform not those lips framed for the seat of joy, with that scornful smile;

smile ; thou must, Enemonde, confess, that through every stage of life, a woman pants to excel all her sex, and monopolise admiration. Rosabel no longer excites wonder in one sex, nor jealousy in the other. Why should she ? Ought her wishes to wander beyond the possession of her husband's affections ?

Enemonde. Did she but possess them, I grant you, that the rest were superfluous---but let herself decide.—Heaven bless you, housewife ; you are sinking with fatigue ! Your spouse, methinks, might alleviate your labour.—He might ease my labour, said the young wife, and wiped the tear from her languid eye ; he might ease my labour ; but, alas ! he is weighed to the earth with his own.

Francesco. Is it not sweet to you, to toil for him ; to him, to toil for you ; to both, to labour for your children ?

Rosabel. Alas ! I could chearfully hew my way through the present, did but a joyous future promise to terminate our misery. But all our pains scarcely defend our poor hut against the driving rain and beating tempest ; scarcely procure these coarse garbs to our shivering bodies, scarcely feed the wick of life with the coarsest aliments. Oft have I besought the blessed virgin for children : now with fervent gratitude I thank her for having denied them. How had I procured the strength and milk to nourish them ? How had I found time to attend to them ?---Mother or child must have perished.

Enemonde.

Enemonde. Toil is painful, my good woman ; but surely a loved husband's tenderness may assuage its rigour.

Rosabel. I thought so once ; but marriage has dissolved the delusion. How indeed, or when, can love find a place in our hearts ? Labour occupies the day, and fatigue claims the night. Can desire live in the dirt and sweat of penury, or the tender frame of pleasure endure unremitting toil and wasting indigence ? However my looks at Vittorio may overflow with affection, he converts them into food for his chagrin ; I may pour out the consolations with which love inspires me, he curses his folly for having united his fortune to that of a creature, who weighs him down to wretchedness. I seek to dispel his gloom,

and

and mitigate his anguish, by tender solicitude and fond endearments. He surlily vows to join some band of robbers, and defy infamy and the wheel for a less laborious subsistence ; and if I murmur a reproachful syllable, I am menaced with his poignard. Some months since, a consuming sickness brought me to the verge of the tomb ; and while appetite sunk beneath anguish and debility, he was not unkind : but when hunger returned before strength, and I ate without earning, he grudged me every morsel, and repined at contributing to my subsistence. O marriage ! is it thus thou unitest souls, that one shall think that stolen from itself, which it imparts to the other ?

Francesco. He was once not so ungentle.

Rosabel.

Rosabel. Never was he thus, till his ill-sorted match and its consequences ruined his fortune, and embittered his temper. Because he gave his hand to his inferior in rank and wealth, he was driven from his father's house, disinherited, and left to subsist by the labour of his hands. Yet, during the first weeks of our nuptials, he was content and gay, and often vowed, that with me this wretched hut was more precious to him than the whole of Salerno. But, ah, how soon he changed! Accustomed to an easy, luxurious life in his paternal mansion, he was unable to submit to the hard fare of indigence. Infected by his discontent, chagrin cankered the roses of my cheeks; my soft, round arm became coarse and meagre,

care

care quenched the fire of my eyes, and
my face no longer beamed pleasure
upon him.

A gruff voice roared from the hut,
Eternal gossip, must the work stand still
for thy chatter? on to the vineyard,
or ——

Rosabel started, and looked terrified;
Vittorio is coming, she cried; I must
go, or he will beat me.

Francesco. What? I will run and re-
monstrate——

Rosabel. For Heaven's sake, stay:—
should you interest yourself for me, you
will excite his jealousy, and I shall fare
the worse. But have I not merited this
treatment? I might have foreseen what
must be the sad consequences of our im-
prudent marriage; they glared upon
me;

me ; but I shut my eyes to them as to a painful light : God keep you both from such willful blindness !

She proceeded to the vineyard : the lovers returned to the city. Pondering on this impressive lesson, they were long immersed in silence : at last the impassioned youth exclaimed, And must thou never be mine, Enemonde ?

Enemonde. Not till our work shall be our pastime, not our business ; the cradle, not the grave of our love. Serve the old Barliardo with diligence, and his will may repay thy attentions.

Francesco. Never : he would think every zecchin bestowed on me, a theft from his darling Benedetto.

Enemonde. One treasure, at least, he will not grudge to communicate to thee---

thee---his knowledge ; and did he not thence derive all his riches ?

Francesco. Science, my Enemonde, is not of so easy transference as money : years after years must creep their snail-paced circuit, ere I could possess thee.

Enemonde. Dost thou fear that age would render me hideous ?

Francesco. No : but I fear the allurements and guiles of Horatio Orsalini. Has he not of late sought the habitation of thy father ; and what should wealthy youth seek in the mansion of poverty, if not thee ? What attractions could the suffering cries of age, oppressed by the conjoined force of infirmity and sickness, have to him, were they not the price of thy converse ? Ha, what a ray of agonizing suspicion does Hell ~~flash~~ ^{to} on my soul !

soul ! he perhaps, too surely, he has taught thee the worth of that gold, from which thou now expectest to reap con-nubial felicity !

Enemonde. Never shall my heart or head harbour a thought so odious, and so despicably irrational. As well might I place the pleasures of the table in eating the rankest viands off silver, or the joys of drinking in quaffing the vilest dregs from goblets of gold. I do not ask to riot in a profusion of riches ; of themselves they bestow nothing which my soul values ; but they *secure* every thing which constitutes my felicity. I ask not immoderate opulence ; but I ask that indigence and labour may not blast my charms before their date expires, and alienate thy affections from me. To

avoid

avoid this dreadful banishment from thy heart, this loss of every thing precious to me, I will never give thee my hand till fortune smiles on our union.

Francesco. Enemonde, thou art indeed lovely; but not so lovely that the haughty mother of Orsalini will count thy charms for ancestors; superior beings might admire thy understanding; but will her ambitious mind consider thy wit as wealth? Never art thou like to come to an agreement with her; and for that very reason, sooner with the son.

Enemonde. Every thing is already settled with him.

Francesco. And my happiness fold with thy virtue!

Enemonde. Oh, that I could hate thee one half hour, for thinking so meanly of me.

me. Could I be tempted to set a price
on my innocence; that price were my
father's happiness. To know that by
my crime, my unhappy parent lived in
ease and affluence, would, if aught could,
effect the impossible---reconcile me to
impurity and guilt, quench the hell-
flames that blazed in my bosom, and
hush the barking monsters of my tor-
tured conscience. What but this re-
flection could console me in the arms of
a libertine, abandoned to infamy, and
enslaved to unholy lust---what but the
reflection, that, by this bargain with
Hell, I sheltered my father from care,
and fortified him against distress? Thou
wert yesterday in our cot: sawest thou
penury converted into abundance, the
earthen jug transmuted into a silver cup,

the rush hangings and rude mats replaced by Persian carpets, and tapestry of Indian workmanship? Wears not the paramour of the rich and generous Horatio a gorgeous robe? Say, is not she resplendent with starry brilliants?

Francesco. Sweet Enemonde, thy eyes dance not more gaily when thou expatiatest on riches, than when thou disfestest thy poverty. If thy yoke is of so easy sufferance, alone, why not consent to bear it with me?

Enemonde. Because I might become hideous, and thou inconstant.

Francesco. *Might!* But barely *might!* And wilt thou sacrifice thy happiness and mine to possibilities? Seest thou not how I melt away in the fire of my passions? how ungratified desires waste my

my juices, and consume my vigour ?
And hast thou not wishes like mine ?
Too oft for denial, have thy burning
kisses betrayed them : Do no anxious
wants disturb thy breast ? Too oft have
thy half-smothered sighs revealed them.
And canst thou not gratify those passions
with another youth ? cannot other lovers
realise thy fond wishes ? Canst thou re-
solve to delay the harvest of love, till
icy winter has stript thee of thy charms,
and spread his snows over thee ? All for
love, is the female maxim ; and the
senses have a majority of suffrage in the
choice of a lover : thyself hast avowed
it. The tender, voluptuous Enemonde
had never elected Francesco, the shri-
velled mummy, the pallid corpse, though
mines of wisdom had enriched his mind,

and the honied dew of persuasion had distilled from his lips: so have thy ravings, sweet enthusiast, assured me. Thy senses are not less inclined since thy choice to prefer the robust and nervous form of the young Hercules, to the softer beauties of the Apollo; and can thy Francesco compare in manly beauty with Horatio? Horatio! When I think of him, a raging fire devours my marrow, and my veins become too confined for my blood. Hear me devote myself, soul and body, to Hell, for vengeance on him, who robs me of thee. I will disguise myself, should his arts win thee, beyond the detection of fear or jealousy: I will mangle my visage, and change my speech, and, covered with impenetrable concealment, slide into the habitation

where thou and thy seducer riot in extacies of voluptuousness : there, by fictitious pictures, I will endear his charms and virtues to thee, and embellish all his perfections : I will make his careffes as necessary to thy heart as aliment to thy frame, or as summer suns to the ripening harvest ; and when thou hast treasured all thy joys in him ; when thou hast no food but his kisses, no place of rest but his arms, I will dash the vessel of thy happiness to the ground, and murder him in thy presence.

Enemonde. Dear, frantic youth ! how thou at once delightest and shockest me ! What proof of love like this madness ! I am thine, and will continue so, though I found thee a complication of vices, an aggregate of all depravities. Were an angel to woo me to his arms,

I would cling to thee, the elect of my heart, though thou wert a vessel of corruption, a bag of contagious pestilence : let the notaries of Heaven record my declaration, and let Hell heat its furnace seven-fold to avenge the smallest violation of it.

Francesco. Enemonde, thou shalt still be mine, or passion is indolent, and resolution fickle as fashion. Soon, soon shall my efforts obtain the golden fleece, though swarming monsters guard it. Our happiness, sweet love, germinates, but to rear it, requires all our attention : be thou constant, as I am resolved, and Alps shall not keep us separate. Adieu, my fair one !

He pressed the lips of his Enemonde with more than his wonted fervour, and, repeating his farewell, repaired to the
habita-

habitation of Barliardo. He slid into the chamber, and found the careless Benedetto locked in sound but easy slumbers. Francesco envied the happy child his calm clear sleep, and cast himself, perturbed with passion, and troubled with crowding projects, on his couch, where no lenient power hovered over him and shed the soft dews of repose on his harassed mind. Jealousy stood beside his pillow, and whispered tales, that drove him to phrensy: Desire infused its cantharides into his blood, and his downy couch was a rack of agony to him. Sleep hovered over him, but to tantalize him with the hope of repose, that continually fled his eyelids. Like this night were many of the ensuing: his fierce desires lighted up fever in his body and phrensy

in his soul : the confidence, with which the assurance of Enemonde had filled him, gradually disappeared, as the last gleam of twilight fades away, when night asserts her domain over the whole hemisphere. Care harassed him without remission : in vain he strove to cast off the load of anxiety which weighed on his spirits and crushed every sentiment of pleasure. Every joy he had once loved grew insipid while higher bliss allured him : to lead Enemonde to the nuptial bed was the wish that tyrannised over him, and he brooded day and night on the means of accomplishing this purpose.

It chanced one day, as he had with cheerful promptitude accompanied Benedetto in all the meanders of spontaneous gaiety and mirthful caprice, and by participating

participating the wantonness of the boy had led him at his will, while he seemed to follow, that the old man, elated by the hilarity of the child, cast more grateful glances at the youth, who contributed so largely to the happiness of his darling. Francesco seized the moment, when gladness and gratitude collected in his patron's countenance, like fructifying clouds in an April sky, and prepared by every art to make them descend in a golden shower. Praises of the lad's intelligence, frankness, and sensibility, opened the discourse, and, warmed with paternal fondness, Barliardo ratified every commendation with a, True, Francesco ! and he closed all with saying, 'tis a soft wax on which every stamp will leave a clear and perfect impression.

Francesco.

Francesco. Fortunate child, who will receive a form from the moulding of Barliardo, that princes or angels might envy him ! long have men inveighed on the folly and injustice of Fortune. Behold her calumniators refuted. All have said that she gives without reason, and takes away without justice ; that she raises to the throne those who, lower than the soles of the lowest, have been made the footstool of the vulgar ; and that she sets the foot of meanness on the neck of him to whom rank and riches have bowed the knee ; that she tears the corpse of the patriot from its grave, and loads it with obloquy and outrage, and canonizes the villain ; that she pours the poison of vice into vases of porphyry, and the precious myrrh of virtue into broken vessels ;

vessels ; that her whole administration is a game at cross purposes ; making the lame, couriers ; the blind, guides ; and the dumb, criers. Scandalous, groundless aspersions ; the sentence of interested judges ; the declaration of criminals on the rack, bent to exculpate themselves by accusing others ! at least, Fortune in her treatment to me and Benedetto has evinced her discernment, and demonstrated her equity. The gentle Benedetto she leads by the hands of the wise Barlaldo to honour and opulence, to independence and happiness ; and me, unworthy as unfortunate, she leaves to grovel in poverty and neglect.

Pietro. How, Cousin ! do you style yourself poor ? have you not every necessary ? do you not enjoy numberless superfluities ?

superfluities? are your employments more than salutary exercise, than a sharp spice to enliven your pleasures, which daily enjoyment might render insipid? seest thou not in the future, as in the past, a laughing harvest spring gratuitous for thee? I sow for thee now; after me, Benedetto will provide for thee.

Francisco. My Father! so my benefactor has permitted me to call him, and let that tender appellation assure him that all his benefits live in my memory; do not think that the mention of my unworthiness was intended to convey any reproach on you; it was but the grateful prattle of convalescence in the presence of its physician; a thanksgiving for preservation by enumerating the dangers averted. Your favour has rescued me from

from indigence, and Benedetto's affection may perpetuate your benefits ; but does man need only raiment for his limbs, tasteful viands for his hunger, and repose for his weariness. The child thinks himself rich with these, 'tis true ; the boy too is content : in selfish joy spring all their transports ; they know no greater bliss than to receive : But man feels the sublimer delight of giving. I am now a man, and the narrow joys of youth leave my heart vacant ; I pant for nobler occupations, and would seek to be happy by imparting felicity. Dependence is not the destination of man ; under his robuster arm, weakness should find protection ; yet what wretch blesses me for shelter ? As men, we should repay to others, what has been lent us in our weaker

weaker years ; yet in the whole circle of sentient beings I meet none to whom I add a moment's rapture, to whom I impart a ray of extacy, or who sympathises in my discontent with the eternal monotony of this life of nullity. I feel myself rich in energy, and repine that no one's stock of pleasures is augmented by my exertions. I come among men a mere spectator, not a partaker of their social joy ; conferring no benefits, exciting no gratitude. For me no contending friends employ the emulous careſs; on me rests no eye searching for its confident ; no arm stretches out to draw me into communion. I am saluted without warmth, invited without earnestness, received without pleasure, entertained without courtesy, and retire without notice. Scarcely
is

is it remarked that I was present, or I am remembered to be more formally forgotten. Should any one take umbrage at my words or actions, in the wide universe of possibilities he can see no inducement to demand an explanation; the slightest reference is too precious to be thrown away on me. No swelling bosom seeks to effuse itself into mine, no heart claims fellowship with my heart, no wretch sends forth a sigh to ask my compassion. Never dares my heart unfold itself; no heart is responsive to its joys or sorrows. If I forget that I am not of the fraternity, and presume to communicate on equal terms, I am regarded as an impertinent; if I come without an invitation, I am an intruder; if I condole with the vexed, I am troublesome; if I congratulate the fortunate, I

am insolent. Thus, nothing to others, I am nothing to myself. Oh, my father ! 'tis a dreary disheartening thought to be of worth to no individual ! it makes a soil sterile, that might produce an hundred fold ; it spreads a waste round me immeasurable as eternity. I feel that in social utility consists the well being of social creatures : knowing this, to people this solitude is the burning desire of my soul, and a craving that stings me to distraction.

Pietro. Whims, vapours, Cousin, mere phantasies ! the fractious family of satiety and leisure !

Francesco. Oft have I asked myself what was wanting to me ; have stretched my discontent on the rack, to wring from it its instigators. Was I ill, your attention and skill drove away sickness ;

was

was I overcast with gloom, Benedetto's
frolic mirth chased away melancholy and
attuned me to gaiety. Yet are all human
ills included in sickness and ill humour?
can the heart of man be filled with elasti-
city of fame and light cheerfulness
only? Were death this instant to snatch
me from the world, what monument of
my usefulness should I leave behind me?
Could I promise myself remembrance, or
regret? A day would slide over my tomb,
and I should be forgotten; and I would
fain live in the memory of some one while
memory endured.

Pietro. Good Cousin, ever shall thou
live embalmed in my remembrance.

Francesco. As what? 'tis not enough
to be remembered, but to be remember-
ed as the author and creator of happiness;

as tis not enough to live, but to live as the benefactor of a creature capable of feeling a benefit. To live thus in such an one, so that its felicity be mine; mine its; to be one and indivisible with it; to have a community of necessities and forces; to augment our joys by communication; to lighten our sorrows by division; to have the same end, and pursue it by the same means; to be one mind in two bodies! Ah! I am nothing alone, as the flint is nothing alone; as the steel is nothing alone; by co-operation only they beget fire. I am a seed in dry earth, and the genial shower is necessary to make me germinate and fructify.

Pietro. That fertilising rain shalt thou find in mine, and Benedetto's friendship.

Francesco.

Francesco. I fear, but a drizzling shower, moistening the surface of the soil without penetrating to the seed; and my clogged forces need the soaking streams of the autumnal equinox.

Pietro. Oh, Francesco! the benignant dews of friendship have made hearts of granite teem with deeds of virtue.

Francesco. Not long since I strolled with Benedetto to the beach, to enjoy the cool breath of evening, and a young maiden walked before us.—Her form! oh Creator of the world, how do thy works mock the feeble colours of language! let me not belie her beauty, by an unworthy portraiture. Her elegant limbs showed through her decent vestment, as the summer sun through the light clouds, that temper his glories

without defacing them ; veiled but not deformed ; their charms not impaired though diminished. Light as cheerfulness, and airy as liberty, she tripped before, and my eyes spontaneous pursued her.

Pietro. Cousin, you grow tedious, and weary me.

Francesco. And is the ear of friendship so soon fatigued by the effusions of the friend ? Then, friendship, will not thy banks suffice my draughts on thee ! The livelong day has this girl listened attentively to my fond effusions ?

Pietro. As Benedetto does to thy tales, to forget them ; that he may ask, hast thou no new story, Francesco ?

Francesco. No, by the avenging sword of Heaven ; but as to the last injunc-
tions

tions of an expiring Father. We were already near her, when the sound of our steps caught her ear, and she turned towards us : dazzled by her charms, Benedetto dropt on his knees, and exclaimed; ah, Francesco, the holy Virgin !

Pietro. Indeed! and you, Cousin?

Francesco. On me dawned the first day; the universe invested itself in colour and radiance, and I became sensible of the worth of my existence: yet while joy streamed on my soul, I disdained every selfish feeling. Her glance ensnared all my faculties, my powers, and inclinations; she robbed me of every thing at the moment she gave me all. I felt that she stole me from myself, and took from me even the consciousness of my individuality. The perception of my

nullity flashed on me, yet I felt no chagrin. The dearth of the past first became visible, yet I felt no regret: the smiling future consoled me, and chased the dreary retrospect from my mind.

Pietro. How habitual is enthusiasm to youth! not delirium more so to madness.

Francesco. Whether she took alarm I am ignorant, but she turned suddenly to the city. I followed her, as I should have done had raging Ætna poured its red torrents between us. A cavalier rushed towards her with an impetuosity, which terrified her; she flew towards an adjacent wood; he after her; I followed.

Pietro. And Benedetto?

Francesco. Translate a Pilgrim to the skies, and ask if he has been careful to

bring his staff with him. The Cavalier threw his arms round the girl and dragged her roughly to the wood ; she cast a look to me for aid, which had drawn a fiend to the succour of a sinking angel. My strength seemed to dilate to omnipotence, my frame to gigantic dimensions. I rushed on the insolent assailant like a thunder bolt, beat him to the earth, and tearing his poignard from his grasp, bade him fly, if life were of any worth to him,

Pietro. And abashed and intimidated he fled. The circumstances were known to me, report was loud in your applause, and that you could suppress the action pleased me. He who wears the rose, which he has reared, in his bosom, soon commits it to corruption and decay ; and

an ostentatious display of our merits robs them of their sweet odour. Yet to divine the source of thy generous temerity I own exceeded my penetration.

Francesco. The suppliant look of beauty imploring succour, was the gladdening beam, the genial rain that vivified and called forth my powers.

Pietro. The look of Enemonde? ah Cousin, thy conscious cheeks blush confession. Can that look have taught thee love, and robbed Benedetto of thy friendship? A deeper crimson pleads guilty. I tremble for thee, Cousin; the eyes of women are delusive lights, that lure their credulous pursuer to destruction.

Francesco. Should the look of Enemonde have taught me love, what follows?

Pietro.

Pietro. You will have gorged a delicious bait, in which a barbed hook lies in ambush.

Francesco. Does love take captive to kill ?

Pietro. And if he but take captive, is not captivity a sufficient evil ?

Francesco. Voluntary subjection is the genuine liberty.

Pietro. In sovereignty there are no gradations ; love, if thy master, is absolute, or he is nothing.

Francesco. Government subsists but by opinion, and depends on the will of the subject ; either I love my slavery then, or I am free.

Pietro. Away with the dazzle of illustration : to the point, Cousin. Your heart prompts you to closer connections with your species, and Love and Friend-

ship are candidates for your preference ; both daughters of one mother---Self love. *That*, a young wanton girl, who skips over every obstacle, and throws herself into your arms ; *this*, a sedate matron, that with considerate steps advances to you, and will be wooed 'ere won. *That*, requires the sacrifice of your own judgment and will, and promises wonders of the Heavens with which she can reward you ; *this*, demands the same oblation, and is silent on the recompence. *That*, magnifies your hopes by gaudy descriptions of future felicity, and diminishes your enjoyment by raising expectation above reality ; or tantalizes you with a shew of delicacies, which exist but in appearance : *this*, promises nothing, for she desires not suitors of interested

views,

views ; but, once gained, she proffers all she has, and a cornucopia is at her disposal. *That*, flaunts in silks and glitters in diamonds, but her whole wealth is collected on her exterior; *this*, affects a homely simplicity of habit, but her treasury is inexhaustible. You will prefer seductive Love, for your senses are your guides, and you would prefer the aromatic ciannamonto the medicinal coloquintida. The inconsiderate infant attracted by the splendor of gold despises the sober utility of iron; and, fascinated with the gay hues of the garden, heeds not the precious profusion of Ceres. Friendship, busied with realities, neglects appearances ; Love is all parade and speciousness : Friendship, is fruit without flower ; Love, flower without fruit.

Francesco.

Francesco. Rather, Love is a blossom,
which marriage ripens into fruit.

Pietro. Say, which marriage cankers
and destroys ; marriage is the coffin, not
the cradle, of love. Marriage kills Love,
as food hunger, or knowledge curiosity :
untasted we covet, enjoyed we loath and
shrink from it. Nay, 'tis worse ; we are
disgusted 'ere satisfied. Love spreads the
festal board with sweetmeats and painted
dainties, that cheat the eyes, promise
pleasure to the palate, and content to
the appetite. But the taste is cloyed 'ere
hunger has subsided, and we quit the ill-
lusory banquet with dissatisfaction and dis-
gust. You turn to the window, and to an
object that affords an apt emblem of our
subject. See over the liquid glass a gay
galley skims in full bearing ! sportive as
the

the swallow, yet stately as the swan, she slides over the cerulean surface ; her gaudy streamers float adown the playful breeze, her gilded stern towers above the waves that idly lash her helm, and her dashing oars insult the spumy waters. A gallant sight, Francesco, a heart-expanding spectacle ! How thy eyes pursue the gay vessel, strain their vision to the utmost to prolong the pleasure, and still dwell on the point where distance veiled her from thee ! And what procured thee this delightful spectacle ? the extorted efforts of the miserable convicts. Think of their state in their gilded prison ! What joys it them that, their limbs are rent asunder on a *gorgeous* rack, that conceals their tortures from the superficial gazer, and cheats him with a

face

face of splendor ? Behold, Francesco, a portraiture of matrimony ; not delineated by love, nor coloured by enthusiasm, but inspired by experience, and executed by impartiality.

Francesco. Colour is in the eye ; all depends on the organ with which we view objects.

Pietro. Close by the shore, two fishermen in their little skiff watch their nets : a rush mat, their sail, serves to screen them from the torrid sun. Gazing admiration does not follow them to the mid sea, but neither does danger ; and their light helm an infant's strength might manage. They toil for their own profit, not for the vanity or avarice of others. With what cheerful diligence they mind their tackle ! how fraternally they relieve each

each other! how exultingly they view their panting captives, and encourage themselves by the sight to hope a copious draught from their venture! Should a wild whirlwind raise itself in the heavens, and with its weighty wings beat the sea into commotion, cast the boat into the great main, and repel the proud galley to the reefy shore, which, think you, the fishermen or the slaves, would be more strenuous to preserve their vessel?

Francesco. The fishermen, doubtless--- At least, when the galley splits, the slaves regain their freedom.

Pietro. Take, then, without the disguise of similitude, my naked conceptions of marriage. Friendship, pure friendship, is the only salt that can preserve love from putridity: 'tis the sap and blood

that

that gives vitality to wedded affection, which without it is a leafless trunk, an inanimate corpse, destitute of soul and sentiment. And how oft hast thou insisted to me, that constraint is death to friendship, that the shadow of a yoke lies like lead on the neck of this benefactress of mortals ! and does not marriage impose the heaviest of yokes ? does it not constrain thee to perennial affection to thy wife, and thus annihilate free option, the basis of friendship ? What then supports your love ? Love too, the purest, most sentimental love, will delude, will deck the loveliest virgin with imaginary beauties : enjoyment and custom dissipate the enchantment, and reverse the charm. They wear off the gloss and bloom of novelty, pall the vivid hues ; and wherever they pass,

pals, pollute and crush the once lovely flower. They discolour and aggravate every blemish of the wife, and contrast them with the perfections of the mistress, whom, in the infatuation of love, we fondly believed immaculate. Will Love continue the deposit, when he finds himself thus deceived in the depositary? Love cannot subsist withoutt enthusiasm, nor enthusiasm without the persuasion of divinity; and if no man can be a hero to his valet, far less can a woman be a goddes to her husband? Nor is this all; gnawn by disappointment thou must conceal thy chagrin, and in default of solid happiness strive, impossible task! to retain the shadow of it, that thou mayst be accounted possessor of a jewel thou hast not.

Marriage is the mystery of Freemasons,

which having learnt, we have learnt nothing; yet which we vaunt to the uninitiated to gain their admiration, or escape their contempt. 'Tis a purchase in which we have been deceived, but with which we must appear satisfied, to conceal our bad bargain. Marry and be convinced of my statements. Thou wilt then learn to submit thy man's reason to woman's caprice. Thou wilt learn to set thy heart and face at variance, and with bitter chagrin, and icy apathy in thy soul, to boast the perennial summer of love, and the ever-springing sweets of wedlock, lest thy friends should set thee up a mark for their derision, and say, thou art like the steed who wished to exchange his mossy bed for straw, and bought his litter with his freedom. Evils rise in such hosts,

hosts, that, which first, which last to take, I know not. Thou wilt learn at the screaming whistle of thy mate to ply the laborious oar, and wind the reluctant rudder, that she may glide smoothly along in gay pomp, and flaunt her silken streamers, if thou wilt not endure the incessant scourge of her biting tongue, and find thy hoped couch of bliss a bench of excruciating torture; if thou wilt not that she let out her beauties to lavish gallants, and deck herself with the gains of impurity. Canst thou out-cringe the satraps of an oriental tyrant? Canst thou be the tool of his vile desires; or bend thyself into the horse-block of his lazy arrogance? All this could'st thou do, thy patience might sink under the whims of woman.

Francesco. Let me for a moment relieve you, Sir. Benedetto recited to me of late the rescript of the inspired Chrysostom: "What is woman but a gay weed, an enamelled serpent, a delicious poison, a disguised devil? what but the arch enemy of friendship, the death of tranquillity, the scourge of life, a domestic plague, a mortal fury?" From you he had the picture: perhaps you have read to-day Juvenal's satire on the women of Rome?

Pietro. Wherever I read it, it was an extract from the volume of truth. Is it any diminution of a grievance, that all ages and nations have groaned under it. Wine caused the head-ache and nausea, long ere we felt its intoxicating effects;

and it will cause them when we no longer feel its pernicious operation.

Francesco. And he, who would decry festivity, says only that wine occasions head-aches; not that it delights the taste and glads the heart of man. Are the infirmities of woman always disgusting maidies, their foibles odious sins? Cannot the husband overlook them as the friend; or does friendship purify from all imperfections?

Pietro. The friend remarks the faults of his friend to correct them; but to amend the failings of woman, would be to clear the sea beach from weeds, on which every fresh tide replaces them.

Francesco. A common-place proverb, my good Sir; and proverbs are counters, which, though we give and take them in

play, are not current in concerns of interest. Is man without faults ?

Pietro. His life is insufficient to amend them: and would'st thou become physician to another, while all thy art and care are wanted for thyself?

Francesco. That piece recoils on yourself. But are the virtues of the sex no indemnification, or have women none ?

Pietro. A malicious question, Cousin, which I will answer as Heaven and my poor wits enable me. When I say, sickness is the attendant of ineptitude, do I deny to wine restoring and exhilarating powers ? All the works of God have virtues, even toads to absorb poisons, and shall this master-piece of creation alone be destitute of them ? But the virtues of woman are antidotes to him, who is already poison-

ed,

ed, not preventatives against infection ; and why should'st thou poison thyself because thou hast at hand a remedy ? Fidelity, gentleness, patience and tenderness are the dowry which heaven has bestowed on woman ; but to prove the fidelity of thy wife thou must neglect her ; to ascertain her meekness, she must steep in the irrosive effusions of thy rage and austerity : misery must overwhelm thee, would'st thou certify her resignation ; consuming maladies corrupt thy juices, and sap thy strength 'ere her tender solicitudes can serve thee. And would'st thou lame thyself to find use for a crutch, or build thy house on a marsh that thou might'st bring cramps and props into employment ?

Francesco. Do you then esteem the foundation of every marriage a marsh ?

F 4

Pietro.

Pistro. Till you name me a sure basis
 on which nuptial felicity may be erected.
 Are the excellences of the mind the
 ground of thy passion? Know you now
 the true from the counterfeit? Can you
 determine in the glitter of distance the
 genuine brilliant from the ignobler chry-
 stal? Marriage gives you closer inspec-
 tion, but then you have bought the stone
 and must abide your purchase. Or do'st
 thou build on personal beauty, on fond
 caresses, and the strict embrace of con-
 summated love, the stability of thy af-
 fection? But these, while they feed the
 senses, starve the soul; and enjoyment
 blunts the edge of their favour. Is man
 formed to know no change, or will Hy-
 men variegate his gifts with eternal diver-
 sity? Wilt thou never pant to press the
 velvet lip of another and more captivat-
 ing

ing fair, when thy wife's are become
trite and stale to thee ? Oh, Francesco,
thou know'st not the heart of man, that
aggregate of contrarieties, that seat of
intestine war and civil discord ! we en-
joy but to find in our enjoyments mate-
rials for new wishes, to engender and
multiply desires on them. Smite off a
head of the Hydra, and two shall rise upon
thee : spin out thy soul in redoubling
passions ; be consumed by the brood of
lust thou hast begotten, thy cravings shall
encrease by gratification, and thy poverty
be augmented by opulence.

Francesco. And can I never chain my
constancy to one woman ?

Pietro. Yes ; from gratitude. But
would'st thou plunge mid the liquid
mountains of the agitated ocean, to owe
thy

thy life to a preserving hand, and be the slave of obligation ever after ?

Francesco. And if, regardless of your representations, and of the invectives of the holy Chrysostom, the sweet intoxication of love should hurry me to dare every danger, and neglect every consideration ; to dig for the precious metal, heedless of chilling damps, suffocating vapours, and crushing ruins ; if I persist to taste the tempting fruit, which you labour to represent so noxious : what then ?

Pietro. Then, Cousin, I would cast thee from my heart, wer't thou the ark and palladium of my prosperity : I would despair and die, for that my benefits had not moved thee to more gratitude, and secured thy friendship to my nephew.

Unfortunate

Unfortunate boy ! to strangers, intent but
to enrich themselves by thy plunder, must
I commit thee : to robbers must I leave
thee, attracting rapacity by thy wealth,
and emboldening it by thy weakness. Like
the shade of an unburied wretch, my soul
shall flit around thee ; strive to warn thee
of the thick dangers that lye in ambush
for thee, and find my efforts ineffectual :
attempt to tear the meretricious
mask of Vice from her abhorred visage,
yet see thee clasp the specious monster in
thy arms ; and plunge at last, desperate,
into hell, with thy corrupted spirit. Oft
have I, deluded dotard, thought that he,
whom consanguinity called to the charge,
would be a father to my Benedetto.
Why, Francesco, do'st thou strike from
me the last support of my declining exist-

ence,

ence, and tear from me the pillow on which I could have expired with resignation and cheerfulness ?

Francesco. My father ; the husband does not annihilate the kinsman. Enemonde should hold divided empire with Benedetto in my care and affections.

Pietro. Fond error ! Enemonde would tyrannise over all thy faculties : her smile would draw thee from my poor boy, were he involved in flames, or whelming in the great waters : her wishes would send thee to the four quarters of the globe, to feed her caprice with baubles. What then will become of thy neglected Cousin ? he will riot uncultivated and unregarded, and wilden in body and in soul. Thou wilt extend thy views into futurity far over my poor Benedetto, or use his possessions

possessions as a stepping stone to advance thee in thy projects : should thy wife bear thee children, he will not have a corner in thy heart left to him. Go, ungrateful Francesco, to thy Enemonde ; her embrace will repay thee, the loss of my friendship ; her lucid eyes swimming in voluptuous joy will teach thee to despise my tears of anguish for my hapless nephew ; her rapturous murmurs indemnify thee for the dying curses, which a despairing old man shall mutter against thee. May Heaven never fulfil them, though thou art mine and Benedetto's murderer !

Francesco. Cease, my father, to anticipate your curses !

Pietro. Go, exult with thy paramour, at thy barbarous desertion of me ; I will
change

chahge the name of my house, and disclaim thy affinity: Benedetto shall seek, in the mortifications and chagrins of a cloister, sanctuary against vice, and monks shall inherit my ample possessions.

Francesco. My benefactor, my father, torture not thyself with these fears: I only said were it so; but it is not so.

Pietro. It is not? *Francesco,* wer't thou my declared heir, I should think thou meant to snap the strings of life by this sudden transition from the relaxation of despair, to the intensest rapture. It is not so? Thou art not infected with love? yet why the glowing cheek and suspended respiration?

Francesco. The eyes of Enemonde had kindled love in me; but our indigence, my gratitude to you, and affection to Benedetto,

nedetto, supprest it. Your discourse reminded me of my recent struggles, and shame died my face with blushes.

Pietro. May I believe this, Francesco?

Francesco. Let my words be registered in Heaven!

Pietro. Infirm and timid age is by nature incredulous. Good kinsman, wilt thou confirm my reliance on thy assurances by an oath which I will dictate to thee? Wilt thou swear never to desert Benedetto, or by a marriage transfer thy affections from him to another object?

Francesco. Never to transfer my affections by marriage? never? never? *I will.*

Pietro. Follow me into the library; there, before the crucifix, to swear by the redeeming grace of Heaven —

Francesco.

Francesco. Never to desert him, never by a marriage to transfer my affections to another ?

Pietro. Ay : why do'st thou reiterate this to thyself ?

Francesco. Shall I not examine what I pledge myself to perform ? So shall I not pledge myself above my powers of accomplishing. An engagement built on scrupulous hesitations, stands on the firmest basis.

Pietro. True, true : wise was thy reiteration, good Francesco. Swear also to conceal what I will unveil to thee, in the darkest recesses of thy soul, and to keep thy tongue ever ignorant of it.

Francesco followed the old man into the library, and there swore before the image of salvation, to contract no marriage

riage during the life of Benedetto; to be a friend and a guardian to him, and to shroud in secrecy, inscrutable as the ways of avenging Heaven, what Barliardo should communicate to him.

Scarcely was the awful attestation completed, when the old man, elate with joy and triumph, prest the youth to his bosom, and murmured in accents, interrupted by the swell of exultation, how, how can I reward thee, kind Francesco? thy first oath grafts, in Benedetto's redemption, new life on my withered stock. Far, far recede the killing fears that I should leave him helpless and alone to the mercy of rapacious man, that carnivorous savage, that hungry cannibal, whose friendship or enmity is alike fatal to body and soul. Now he is secured to

me, now he is secured to thee, Heavenly Father, since Francesco is secured to him.

This, kind restorer of my sickening tranquillity, be the thanks of my lips; thou hast sacrificed to my felicity and Benedetto's welfare, a first unaccomplished love, to which thou wert fastened by the strong chains of uncloyed desire and ungratified curiosity. Thou hast sacrificed it in the heat of youth, and in the summer solstice of a tropical temperament. Gratitude has not stores to repay thee, but what it can, it shall; follow me.

He seized Francesco's hand, and sliding back a pannel of the wainscot, lead the astonished youth into a spacious chamber beneath the floor. A white curtain divided it, which Pietro having drawn aside,

aside, he turned to Francesco, who stood petrified with surprise, and bade him survey the inestimable treasure which awaited him. On the floor of the apartment, which was hung with sable tapestry, he observed three circles formed by fillets of parchment, stained with mysterious characters, diagrams, and figures of monsters more hideous than ever issued from the womb of nature. The outer circle was supported on twelve crosses of the sacred palm; the inner, on the same number of crosses of thorn; the middle rested on twelve of laurel. Within these circles lay, in an oblong quadrangle, a white dragon, with golden crest and scarlet wings, holding in his claws a yellow lizard; and in an oval inscribed parallel to the door of the vault, was a triangle con-

taining the name of the Mysterious Omnipotent, surrounded by three flames. Over the vertex of the triangle rested on two crossed bones a human scull, from the eye cavities of which projected a naked sword and a branch of palm, and in the crown was fixed a cross, round which twined a silver serpent. Behind these sacred barriers, which the combined force of Erebus dares not invade, stood an altar compacted of human bones, and supported by four monstrous forms, for which language affords no name. Seven candlesticks bearing high yellow tapers of wax, formed a heptagon round the altar and circles; and midst these stood four terrific forms, bearing diadems and sceptres, and clad respectively in flame-coloured, azure, blood-red, and cerulean robes; emblem-

emblematic of the elementary governors. An enneagon of holy vessels, crosses, chalices, sculls and bones, swords, palm-branches, and doves wings, inclosed the whole mysterious apparatus. On the altar lay the book of incantation unfolded, and seven large seals were suspended to it, by flesh-coloured fillets.

Thy astonishment (so Pietro broke silence) suppresses thy enquiries, and stifles curiosity; I should plunge thee deeper in confusion, were I to reply to all that thy dumb amazement asks: I have promised thee a recompence; now hear its nature and its worth.

Know then, I have long been what envy and suspicion represented me, a student and an adept in magic. The possession of this precious volume gives me sove-

G 3 reignty

reignty over the invisible legions, impowers me to break every restraint which holds them viewless to human sight, in the vast worlds of air, the spacious tracts of water, the wide regions of earth, and the ample realms of elemental fire : this treasury of wisdom teaches me to cite them to my presence by summons they dare not disobey, and to bind them to my will by injunctions, which to their proudest and most powerful prince are inviolable. Yet, convinced as I am, beyond the reach of doubt, of my dominion over the invisible world, I own that I have never yet put it to the proof by any actual summons : whether restrained by the timidity of tremulous age, or withheld by the want of any adequate instigation. On thee, my son, I have cast my

my eyes, for a fit auxiliary in this great undertaking; for thee I have with my own hands fabricated the form of Uric, king of the morning; of Paymon, king of the evening; of Maymon, king of the noon; and of Egyn, king of midnight: for thee I have constructed the circles, and erected the altar; for thee alone have I laboured. I am rich beyond my own wishes, or the wants real and imaginary of my nephew, and the torpid blood of age knows not the fierce passions to which this empire over the ministers of creation might be serviceable. I have confined thee by the short tether of entire dependence on my will, to preclude any transgressions from purity and virtue; either of which had disqualified thee for commerce with the spiritual world. For, know my

son, that the invisible people obey his mandates alone, who never, in the arms of a wanton, sucked the luscious juice of lascivious pleasure, nor fullied his soul with the blotches of impurity. Deaf are their ears to the voice of him, who has stooped even to connubial pleasures ; the call of him, who has laid an injurious hand on his neighbour's goods, who has neglected the rites of devotion, or the duties of charity, who has trampled on his plighted oath, or shed the blood even of a condemned or proscribed criminal, exasperates them to horrible vengeance. Learn now why I wished to controul thy will, to deprive thee of what thou possessedst in expectation; 'twas to return thee thy will regenerated to rectitude, to endow thee with possessions which thy fancy in its wildest dreams

dreams never aspired to. Henceforth beat down every limitation to thy avarice or ambition; all the treasures of the earth are at thy disposal, since their guardians are but as my stewards.

At the sound of this adjuration, the lynx-eyed Aziel brings thee, swift as thy thoughts explode in words, the close concealed gold of the miser. The treasuries of cloisters, and the exchequers of kings, stand open to him. Thy will points, and Aziel brings thee thy wishes, though they were fixed on the summits of the hills that sustain heaven, or buried in the central caverns, where the subterranean fire collects for eruption.

Instant as the struck flint emits fire, or as blood follows the inciding lancet, Aniquel and Marbuel, the spirits of the earth,

earth, execute thy half formed purpose. They empty the hills of their fossile treasures, and unclose to thee the sealed secrets of nature. They give thee insight into the minds of men, whether present, or absent; render every language thy mother tongue, and tame the brute creation to thy services, whichsoever element their habitation. They lead thee through the bowels of nature, and lay all the healing influence of the vegetable world at thy command.

Obedient to thy evocation, Aziabel, the spirit of the waters, drags the great deep, to enrich thee with its engulph'd treasures. Pearls and corals he strews under thy feet, and brings thee every marine production of the unfathomable ocean.

If

If thy ambitious pride pant for the acclamations of the people, or the carefies of the great; is it thy wish, 'mid the hurricane of popular commotion, to be hailed the father of thy country, and the assertor of freedom; beats thy heart to seek the wreath of glory among the stronging deaths of battle; speak but thy will to Machiel, and nature and chance shall conspire to fulfill thy desires.

Would'st thou that thy memory be a library of all sciences and tongues, that every province of art own thy sway and pay thee tribute, that by thy discoveries error should be driven from every fastness, by thy acquisitions every chasm in human knowledge be filled up, every intricacy be unravelled, that by thy skill

every Torso be restored, every Venus completed ; Baruel shall make thee the organ of wisdom, the instrument of the arts ; and sages shall enrich their minds with the lees of thy effusions, artists gild their names with thy dross.

Cast thy eyes over thy treasures, and indulge thy pride in computing how thy power confines on Omnipotence. These six spirits bring thee fortune and glory ready coined ; the seventh, Mardiel, conveys to thee the bullion of every happiness, and leaves thee the exalted labour of stamping it thyself.

Art thou overwhelmed, my son, by the floods of fortune that pour upon thee, that all thy faculties are drowned in amazement, and thou stand'st speechless and stiff as one without life ?

Francesco.

Francesco. I live; but does not the lunatic live also? I feel; but so does the dreamer in his wildest visions: I move; but so does the delirious noctambule. Call me son, shake me to my reason, propose a riddle to me, that I may certify myself my understanding has not abandoned me.

Pietro. Let this embrace chase doubt from thee; this salutation exorcise from thee fear. Tell me, son, what key opened to thee this vault of mystery, this arsenal of power, this treasury of happiness?

Francesco. An oath! ha, and is not reason then a cheat; nor memory a liar! Wealth, wisdom, fame are my vassals, the elements my freeholds, vast nature

but

but my storehouse ! Are all these thy donations ?

Pietro. With all these I endow thee. All these stand at thy use, when prayers, abstinence and vigils, have purified thee for commerce with the unfullied spirits.

Francesco. And, I doubted thy affection, my father ! and all this thou hast given me ? What could move thee to such lavish communication ? what could my gratitude offer worthy a price so enormous ?

Pietro. Benedetto's welfare, which in thy keeping is more secure than in chests of iron. When I buy his happiness with all I possess, I am a gainer by the bargain. Now, my son, repose thyself ; go to thy couch ; if not to sleep,

to

to meditate in the still solitude of darkness. In the night of the visitation of the virgin, I will summon a spirit; be it thine to chuse among them.

Francesco. And 'tis mine to choose among them! mine to decide between such mighty candidates for preference! Be it then the spirit of instruction.

Pietro. Wise Francesco! high in my esteem, as dear to my affections, thy choice merits all I can bestow on thee, and all shalt thou have. Now retire, my son, to repose.

Francesco retired to his chamber, but sleep kept away from him as from the youthful bridegroom on the night that consummates his fiercest wishes. As easy had it been for the shipwrecked mariner to sleep on the shattered plank,

which

which alone supports him on the wild
waves that yawn for him, as for the young
Barliardo to win a momentary slumber
from the crowd of cares that beset him.
He fancied himself crushed under the
weight of Pietro's treasures, like the
Tarpeian maid beneath the Gaulish obla-
tions ; and he panted and heaved under
the oppression of imaginary terrors. His
disordered brain raised a hundred ra-
pacious phantoms around him, who all
strove to seize his treasures ; and, till he
had chased away these visionary robbers,
he could not lie on his precious heaps,
and brood over his wishes in quiet. Then
he remembered that he was not yet master
of his expectations, and all his wealth
funk from his sight, through the leaky
vessel of uncertainty. New obstacles
seemed

seemed to interpose ; and by murder's horrid path only could he arrive at his object. Uncertainty at last cleared up, his terrors were dissipated by the gay illuminations of Hope, and his heart reposed in confidence of his security.— Here flashed on him the enquiry, to what use he should apply his riches ? and Love was ready to answer, What jewel is there so precious as Ene-monde ?

The man, who, catching at a supposed variegated fillet, finds a serpent in his grasp ; the alchymist, who, after a life's labours, finds his transmuted gold base metal, starts not with such wild surprise at the chilling discovery, as did the terrified Francesco, when he found the worthlessness of his acquisition. Ha !

H exclaimed

exclaimed he, convulsed with the sharp pang of disappointment, and have I sold my living treasure, my charming Ene-monde, for senseless gold, and visionary phantoms of ambition and vanity ? Have I bartered thy love-attuned accents for the shrill chink of zecchins ? Have I paid the pearls and rubies of thy cheeks for the yellow gleam of gold, and given thy fervid fondness for the favour of an old peevish miser ? Wretched dupe ! infatuated bubble ! And have I received the recompence of this inestimable sacrifice ? Have I security that I shall ever receive it ? Why does Pietro give me but expectation, and reserve possession for his nephew ? Hell and horror ! means he to cheat me with an empty delusion ? Am I neglectful of my own, to

watch over the boy's happiness, and find deception and disappointment the sole reward of my solicitude? What certainty have I that spirits own allegiance to necromancy, or that they will obey his summons? What certainty has he himself? Why did he never call them to his presence, or make his darling nephew monarch of the invisible world? Why did he not, if he had the power, appoint one of these superior beings, in a human form, to be the guardian angel of his favoured boy? Benedetto! no care but for Benedetto! Curses on the intruding boy, and on the father that begot him, and intercepted from me Pietro's riches! His life is the sole bar that divides me from affluence and Ene-
monde.

Back from this spot were an aby's
behind me : 'tis a thought surrounded
with horrors, from which the most mur-
derous heart must revolt, astonished and
petrified. Avaunt, fiend, that drags me
on to infernal machinations ! Burst, my
soul, through this world of atrocity, into
purer regions, and bleach thyself from
the sins its pitchy air has polluted thee
with.—Ha ! the close contrivance
opens before me ; I penetrate the in-
sidious snare—Were the invisible people
my ministers, would not Benedetto's life
be in my hands ? And would the linx-
eyed Pietro entrust to my care his pre-
cious treasure, and secure me impunity
for the embezzlement of it ? No : in-
fancy or dotage would be more cautious ;
and I only am the fool. Artful old man,
thy

thy frauds had lulled my vigilance and suspicions to sleep : but they wake, renewed and redoubled.—And, grant his promises valid ; say, the lords of the elements are his vassals, and I the heir of his dominion in its full extent, what were the throne to me, which I could not share with Enemonde ? Yet is there no ransom which can release me from slavery to an oath ? What aperitive like gold ? And then would not the whole world be my treasury ? Stay—Enemonde, if not my consort, may be my paramour ; and my gold shall charm the dragon—virtue. Can the mercenary blessing of a lazy priest confer connubial felicity ? Can it fix beauty, or preserve health and gaiety ? Can marriage-certificates render her lips more sweet, my

H 3 embrace

embrace more ardent? And, if not, what have I to do with marriage?— Yet, has not Enemonde's virtue withstood the temptation of gold?—O! oft, oft! And can a time have come, when my angel's virtue can be odious to me? Should Horatio's mother die, and he offer his hand to Enemonde, vengeance might instigate, and passion allure, her to bestow the casket which contains my happiness on him; and I must be witness of their mutual felicity; must sicken at the joy and tenderness that irradiate their happy features, and madden when the sight of their laughing issue reminds me of the raptures which produced them.—No; rather than this, let Hell arm itself against me with every instrument of damnation!

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Oh,

Oh, what dæmon infatuated me, when
I bound my soul with this accursed oath ?
What could tempt me to turn a fiery
Phlegethon between myself and Elysium ?
Never to marry during the life of Bene-
detto ! --- And is the boy immortal or
invulnerable ? No, Pietro, insidious ca-
joler, I tell thee, no ; my arm should
reach his heart, though encircled with
the wings of cherubim. And retribution
sanctifies the blow. I strike but at his
life ; thou hast aimed at my happiness.
Angels, why forbade ye not this incon-
siderate vow, which cuts me off from fe-
licity, and throws me upon demons for
deliverance ? And must I choose between
Enemonde and eternal salvation ? Gra-
cious Heaven, thou canst not impose on
feeble man such heart-rending alterna-

H 4 tives !

tives ! All thy penalties cannot be capital !
 An erected temple, an endowed monastry, can efface crime, and bring eternal justice to composition. And Pietro's coffers contain the materials of ten St. Peter's. Remorse, lull thyself to sleep, nor let thy puling cries disturb me.--- Heaven will not shut its golden gates against my atoning spirit ; and Enemonde has vowed to open her arms for me, though sin had dyed my soul in her own sable.--- Ha, piteous Hell, with what a thought hast thou inspired me ! Black night, thou wert its mother ; and a devil, footy as thyself, has begotten it ! Mature, nursing of Hell, my happiness grows with thee !

no Cousin ! Cousin ! (exclaimed with sudden outcry Benedetto, who now
 waked

waked in a transport of terror) are you there?---Come closer to me, and shelter me in your bosom. I dreamt that a huge dragon was about to devour me, and that you came and slew the monster, and rescued your poor Benedetto from his fury; a thousand times I thank you.

Francesco. Why thank me, cousin? Thank the dream, which brought my image to your rescue; I knew not of your danger, and could not therefore relieve you from it.

Benedetto. Who else, then, could it be? I have no friend but you, cousin, who could have rescued me from such a monster. I know no good folks but you, and uncle, and Enemonde; and uncle is too old, and Enemonde too weak, to kill so large a dragon; had not you
saved

saved me, he had swallowed me alive.---
Come, dear cousin, let me kiss you;
take me to your arms, that I may sleep
safe from every danger: let ugly dreams
then come as they will; you are with
me, and I defy them.

Francesco. No, no!

Benedetto. Pray do; and I will ask my
uncle, in the morning, to give you a
whole handful of gold, that you may buy
a fine gown for Enemonde.

Francesco. Harkee, boy; speak a word
to thy uncle of Enemonde, and—

Benedetto. No, indeed, I won't; in-
deed, I never have. Don't be angry,
Francesco; but come and lie by me,
that these frightful dreams may not
molest and terrify me.

Francesco. Go to sleep, I tell you, and
be quiet,

Benedetto.

Benedetto. I can't, but at your side.

Francesco. I have a fever on me, and you might catch it by lying with me.

Benedetto. Poor cousin, and are you ill? Then I am sure I cannot sleep; I will sit up and watch you.

Francesco. Stay where you are, or I will never take you with me to Ene-
monde. Go to sleep, if you would not put me in a passion.

Benedetto. Nay, good cousin, don't be angry; that will but make you worse; I cannot sleep; but I will not fret and tease you; only call me when you want any thing.

And the gentle boy watched the whole night with Francesco. Oft he asked him, how he found himself? And the answer was ever, Be quiet, and sleep.

sleep. Scarcely did the first gleam of morn peep into the chamber, ere the fond child stept lightly to Francesco's bed, and seeing his eyes red and wildly staring, his cheeks and forehead flushed with feverish fire, and damp with morbid moisture, said, with the very voice of compassion, Indeed, my poor Francesco, you are very—very ill; your hair is dripping wet, your face red as fire, and your eyes are starting from their lids. You must have the physician, or you will die, and I with you,

Francesco. Hast thou so much affection for me, boy?

Benedetto. Yes, indeed I have; much more than for uncle.

Francesco. And would thy love for me hold after his death?

Benedetto.

Benedetto. Indeed and indeed, it would, my Francesco. And then thy Ene-
monde shall live and sleep with us, and share in all our pleasures. I do so love her, find such delight in sitting in her lap, and sleeping on her bosom; and when she kisses me, I do feel so—I don't know how, as it were !

Francesco. Better and better ! Will my cup never be deadly enough, that new poisons must still be pouring into it ? Of what materials, Hell, wilt thou next make my miseries, when children become my rivals ?

Benedetto. What do you mean ? Holy Mother, what has come to you ?

Francesco. I shall find ways though, to quench the flames that fasten on my little tenement, or I will perish in them !

Benedetto.

Benedetto. Francesco ! Francesco ! My God, what has seized you ? You do so clash your teeth, and your eyes shoot such living sparkles — What, what, my poor cousin, is the matter with you ?

Francesco. Away ! boy, the fit seizes me.—Away, I say.

Benedetto. I go to bring you a cup of wine, to moisten your parched lips, and cool the burning thirst that rages in you. Do not die ; for my sake, do not die, my good Francesco.

— And the affectionate boy hurried on his cloaths, and ran, with fond solicitude, to procure relief for one who was machinating his murder.

Francesco. Down, devil ! Can I think of using the arms of Hell against this spotless angel ? No, though furies were to

to goad me on, I would advance no further in my infernal purpose. Yet Ene-monde never mine, while he lives ; nay, his, perhaps ! Eternal damnation ! how Hell has enclosed me on all sides !

He threw on his cloaths, muttering curses, which demons had scrupled to fulfil, and rushed out of the house, into an adjacent forest, to hide his agitation from the face of day, and lose himself in the impenetrable gloom of the lofty pines and expanded cedars.

On he drove through the dark um-brage, and carried with him the same relentless furies, through every winding grove and tangled thicket. Oft, consumed with inward anguish, and panting with fatigue, he would have thrown himself on the earth, for a moment's re-pose ;

pose ; but sulphurous flames seemed to burst from the hillocks, and forbid the resting-place to him. An invisible power seemed to urge him on, spite of his reluctance. When he stopt, the ground quaked under his feet, and the forest groaned around him. Oft he turned, and looked towards Salerno with wishful glances ; but fiends appeared to peep through the morning's misty curtain ; and, shuddering, he hurried on. At length he reached the sea, which now shewed glorious with the liquid gold of the rising luminary ; a wide expanse of polished azure, here and there broken by the gambols of the marine people, or curled by the pure breath of the morning. He mounted a cliff, that stretched beyond its base, over the water, and surveyed the

the fluid below, where he thought Death opened his arms to shelter him from misery, and a voice cried to him, to throw himself on the bed of rest, and escape the turmoils of Passion, the seductions of Hope, and the sharp pangs of Disappointment. Despair benumbed the strings of life ; his eyes gushed with the scalding tears of feverish passion ; the sea, sky, and rocks vanished from his sight, and his limbs tottered under their burthen. His situation was critical : Nature sunk beneath the unremitting persecution she had suffered, and the soul seemed dubious whether to stay, or to quit its mansion for ever. Life at last gained the ascendancy ; the explosion of the morning gun, in an adjacent vessel, called him to himself ; and, re-

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covering recollection and strength, he shook off a trance, which might have terminated in eternal torpor.

With melancholy and tardy steps, he returned to the city, and in his way encountered a young cavalier, richly arrayed, and followed by a numerous retinue. Francesco raised his eyes, and knew him to be Horatio Orsalini ; and seeing a violet-coloured glove, which himself had given to Enemonde, in the cap of the cavalier, felt the flames of jealousy rekindled in his bosom, and all his torments renewed. Burning with revenge, he glared menaces of destruction after the knight, and essayed to bid him halt, and restore the precious trifle : but he was incapable of articulating a sound, which in the least resembled a human

human accent. The swift steed of Horatio soon bore him from the sight of Francesco, who, bursting with rage, and overcome with despair, reeled and dropt on the causeway. Wild and frantic, he started up, and flew to the cot of Enemonde, into which he burst like a robber or an invader. There he found the sick father in his bed, and, asking for his daughter, was told she was at matins. He bade the old man adieu, in a tone that had suited a denunciation of eternal perdition, and stealing into the chamber of Enemonde, rummaged the chests which contained her little wardrobe.— Here meeting but a single glove like that which decked the cap of Orsalini, he snatcht it, vehement as a lioness recovers her ravished whelps from the

hunter, and, having torn it with his teeth, in a transport of rage and jealousy, thrust it violently into his bosom. Every thing conspired to lacerate and rankle his wounded mind, and the fever of his soul was incensed to insanity. He returned to Barliardo's habitation, passed unconsciously through the garden and courts, and ran with breathless precipitation to the monastery of St. Oliveta.

There lived brother Hilario, a friend of his father ; a man, who, by his single virtue, had redeemed Gomorrha from almighty vengeance. He alone, of the whole fraternity, thought a rational belief could not be displeasing to the Divinity ; and, stripping Religion of the fantastic ornaments in which Fanaticism and Priestcraft had enveloped her, viewed
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and shewed her in her own shape, how simple, and how lovely. He was a priest single in his profession, who thought benefits to the living, more pious than masses for the dead ; that the friend of the social charities was the truest servant of Religion ; and that the institutor of one manufactory deserved more applause than the founder of an hundred cloisters. His maxim was, that the duty of priests was to guide, not drive, their flocks to grace ; to be the model of integrity, and mirror of purity to the people ; not the Procrustes standard of their faith, and tyrants of opinion.

The venerable monk met the salutation of Francesco with a warmth that spoke no common affection, and, ob-

serving the ravages which the fierce fire of passion had made in his countenance, and the strong emotions that shook his soul, enquired, with a benignity of condolence that poured balm into the youth's lacerated mind, what boisterous passion had destroyed his serenity, and ruffled the wonted smoothness of his brow ?

Francesco. Some days since, my revered father, in a company of young men, the discourse lighted on the existence of spirits, and the possibility of their appearance in visible forms, in obedience to certain modes of evocation. The greater part of the assembly voted for or against the probability of this proposition, as fancy and prejudice moved them ; the young Pandoli, and myself alone,

alone, spoke decisively on the subject: he in support, I in denial, of it. Whether possessed by the demon of contradiction, or inspired by some slight persuasion of the truth of my negative, I withheld and repelled his arguments with firmness, and was silenced only by his reference to facts, and his vehemently-attested relations. Though my reason was confounded and staggered, my pride would not permit me to concede; and I appealed to you, reverend father, confident that your opinion would sanction mine. Here again Pandoli maintained the contrary, and offered me a wager of fifty zecchins, that you believed the possibility and reality of their commerce with men. I accepted the bet, though I can scarcely call an obolus my own; for,

persuaded that my opinion was your's, I defied the chance of all loss. My security however soon vanished before the risk I had incurred, and the apprehension of being debtor for a sum so much above all I possest has tost me in such restless anguish, that scarcely could my frame sustain the incessant agitation. We had named a day on which to seek decision from you, but unable to wait the close of the tardy period I come to learn your opinion now, and complete my despair, or regain my tranquillity.

Hilario. My son, 'tis the character of rash youth to be certain where certainty is unattainable, till death has removed the mist of mortality from our nature. Presumptions are on this point our only substitutes

substitutes for demonstration, and presumptions alone can I afford you.

Francesco. And you do hold it possible that superior spirits may incarnate themselves in sensible substance at our command ?

Hilario. I hold the contrary ; but you start back, and the wild fire of your cheeks gives place to a deadly paleness. Is this a signal of exultation, this the colour of joy ? how say you ?

Francesco. May not fear and delight, in the common shock of surprise, assume a similarity of appearance ? shattered as my frame has been by terror, even joy oppresses it. But the reasons, Father, the causes, the proofs !

Hilario. Proofs, I have none against the probability of supernatural appear-
ances ;

ances ; I can produce but presumptions.

Francesco. Only presumptions ?

Hilario. My Son, thy face is no interpreter of thy mind, or Terror has fixed its iron reign over thy features for ever. Even now that thy wager is secured to thee, Despair seems to stamp thy brow with her own image.

Francesco. Anxiety has made way for sickness, and I feel myself bend beneath her potent influence. But proceed, Father, and as far as they go, unfold your reasonings.

Hilario. My first step then towards the conclusion, that spirits have no sensible commerce with man, is the enquiry, to what purpose should the communication be established ? to heap benefits on man ?

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he needs not their gifts ; bounteous nature has been sufficiently liberal to him ; nor would heaven with partial hand commit such vast powers to *those*, who neither wiser nor better than others have but penetrated into the dark caverns of necromancy and discovered the forms of evocation. If you say to perform services for the human race ; I reply, their powers are their best vassals. If to warn us of calamities ; let Prudence be on the scout for these enemies of our nature, and we need not fear that afflictions shall take us unprepared for them. To discover treasures to mortals ? industry is the best diviner's wand, and diligence will wrest its prize from obstacles, which to indolence are the tremendous monsters of fable. Can it be to exempt us from

the

the labour of exertion, to render us rich, wise, and honoured without the toil of effort? Were our faculties and talents given us to rust in inaction? Say 'twas to dispel the mists of distance, and illumine the senses of futurity? Heaven has wisely veiled them from our view, nor suffered them to overcast the joys of the passing moment. My Son what harm has my hempen girdle done you, that you rend it with your teeth thus?

Francesco, Father! would to Heaven 'twere the thread of my life! I had soon released myself then from this dungeon of misery. But proceed.

Hilario. Should you suppose, that the object of their interference is to injure mortals; then all my experience, all my reasonings rise in arms against the blasphemous

phemous conjecture. Never can eternal goodness dig pitfalls in the path of the blind.

Francesco. Father have you ever known love?

Hilario. Ask me if I have ever known thirst?

Francesco. Can Passion invade the walls of convents, or his shafts pierce the robe of a monk?

Hilario. What mean you? your wager went to my understanding, not to my sensibility; seek then information from my head, not my heart.

Francesco. Answer, Father, answer.

Hilario. Do you love then?

Francesco. Answer, Father, oh answer me, if you would not see me expire in the anguish of expectation. What has love been to you?

Hilario. My conductor to this cell.

Francesco. Do you bless or curse its guidance ? Answer monk, nor torture me with this delay.

Hilario. Francesco, my Son, what wild passion glares such phrenzy from thy eyes ? a tremor runs through all thy limbs, and scarcely is thy soul contained in thy body.

Francesco. Oh answer instant, Father, rack me not with suspense so excruciating. What is love to man ?

Hilario. What the first draught of air is to the infant ; a pledge and earnest of existence.

Francesco cast himself on the neck of his venerable friend, printed warm kisses on his benignly-beaming countenance, and clasped him with fervour in his arms.

Hilario.

Hilario. Gracious heaven; my son,
what impetuous passion urges thee?

Francesco. Nothing, nothing! you
were saying that the interposition of spirits
in the affairs of men---Proceed, I pray
you.

The good monk shook his head ex-
pressively, and resumed his discourse.
Let us suppose however, that spirits may
be employed in the service of man; we
have still to ask, what powers can con-
strain them to appear in visible shapes at
the summons of a mortal. Supernatural
ones? Whence shall we procure them?
Will human means suffice? What! to rule
supra-human powers? And will these
lords of the elements, these arch-poten-
tates of nature, crouch at the empty
jargon of a feeble mortal, fetch and
carry

carry for his amusement, and pander for his inordinate desires ? Oh arrogance and folly of man ! who, formed but a point in creation, fondly fancies himself the centre to which all beings tend ; and blind to his insignificance conceives the universe constructed for his mansion, and peopled for his service. Phantasy imagined spirits, Fear beheld them, and Imposture and Vanity glorified themselves with the pretended power of raising them at will.

Francesco. Fraudulent or credulous Pietro, expect the punishment of thy treachery, or thy folly ! Farewell, father !

The frantic youth rushed in an agony of rage and desperation from the cell, and the astonished monk gazed after him in speechless terror.

Perturbation

Perturbation is a bad guide: Francesco, instead of passing through the court to the street, entered unconsciously the church, and urged headlong on till the wall terminated his career ; and then with equal precipitation and inadvertence he was returning. The lofty organ struck up a solemn peal, and the sacred harp was touched responsive to its majestic intonation. The deep notes forced their way through the inattention of the agitated youth, and, spite of the clamorous cares that besieged him, he stood still to listen. With a grandeur of declension, and ample magnificence of cadence, the loud instruments ceased ; and melifluous flutes in liquid tones resumed the lay with a plaintive melody, which the still walls echoed with double sweetness. The har-

monious gale soothed the stormy emotions of Francesco, his soul seemed drowning in a sea of sweet sound, and for a moment his importunate cares were lulled to rest. Peace once again hovered over him, and shed her balmy dews on his head.

The soft breath of the flutes melted into a soul-subduing lamentation, and died away in sighs of tender grief, and fond regret. The pathetic strains of a funeral hymn were heard through the soft cloud of instrumental sound, which the deep knell of the full bassoon broke upon like the bell of death. The dirge sunk in gentle cadence, as if Music had lulled Grief to slumber in her arms, and Complaint had kist himself dumb on the honied lips of Consolation. Lower and lower

lower fell the melodious whisper, till
 Echo no longer felt the sound; a silence
 reigned still as the grave, when the shrill
 notes of the viol burst forth like the
 shrieks of long imprisoned Agony, loud
 trumpets shook the ear like the yells of
 raging Phrensy, and a voice, that seemed
 to seek Francesco, sang in accents of
 wild despair,

Restore him to me, murderer!
 Give me back my beloved child,
 The source of my life and happiness.
 Oh Absalom, my son, my Absalom,
 Would to God my life would ransom thine!
 Oh Absalom, my child, my Absalom!

Francesco's heart died within him as if
 every word was addressed to himself: he
 turned pale as if he had been convicted

in open court of murder, and sunk on his knee before an image as if to implore the mercy of his judge. His blood congealed in his veins, and the stamp of death appeared in livid hues on his visage. The moans of the unhappy Father pierced his heart. Collecting all his force for a last charge, he overcame the dismay and anguish that opprest him. Tears of joy signed his victory, that cooled his feverish brain, and eased his bursting bosom. He felt more light and free, and regaining recollection, proceeded with apparent calmness to the mansion of his kinsman.

Barliardo received him with every mark of affection, and observing the deep traces left by perturbation in his countenance, ascribed them to the effervescence

vescence of an enthusiastic mind set to work by the expectation of such wondrous attainments. The ensuing day, he said, should be the first of preparation for the great business, and the morn of that, as well as of the eight following days, must be ushered in with prayers and lustration. Francesco heard the old man to a pause, without making any reply, and then withdrew to his chamber, where nature entirely exhausted and subdued by incessant agitation of spirit sunk into transient and interrupted repose.

On the morning of the fifth day of preparation, it chanced that Benedetto, whom the occupation of the novice in necromancy left almost wholly to himself, was amusing himself as usual in the library of his uncle. He had run over

the painted breviaries, examined the frontispieces of all the well-known books, and feeling tediousness creep on him, was hastening to the garden, when an uncommon projection of a pannel in the wainscot attracted his notice. He drew it from its place from the instinctive impulse of curiosity, and found behind it a door, which had ever been concealed from his sight. He opened the door, and passing through it, was conducted by a winding staircase to a spacious apartment. The wind, which gained admission to the room, blew aside the veil that concealed the magical apparatus, and disclosed the strange spectacle to the wondering boy, who pleased with the novel scene, forgot his amazement in delight. With childish wantonness he threw aside the curtain, and feasted

feasted his eyes with the splendid assortment of forms and colours. Void of all apprehension he advanced to the hideous shapes of the elementary kings, laughed to excess at the stern terror of their features, and aped with his smiling countenance, their threatening looks ; then having torn the golden sceptres from their hands to convert them into playthings, he found his curiosity awake to learn the meaning of this unusual sight. The magic volume lay open on the altar, and the painted page fixed his attention. He beheld therein a black monstrous form with horns and claws, surrounded with triangles, crosses, and cherubims' heads intermingled with written characters, which, prompted by curiosity, he essayed to read. Though the

words were unintelligible to him, he continued to read for some time; hoping perhaps to dive into the sense of these mysteries.

Scarcely had he perused the leaf, 'ere a report was heard, that appeared to rend the beams of the house asunder. Benedetto looked around with anxiety and trepidation, and, lo! before the window a thick mephitic fume rose from the ground, which gradually dilating to every side, shot forth balls of fire, and licked the walls with tongues of livid flame. A burning wind blew from the midst of it, and a sulphureous smoke spread over the room. Dismay struck her icy fangs into the heart of the affrighted boy: He fled from the book, stumbled by accident over one of the

monstrous

monstrous forms, and conceiving himself in the fangs of a demon, lost all power of speech and motion. Scarcely could he crawl to the altar, in search of a place of concealment, when the window frame was flung with tremendous ruin into the chamber, and, at the moment, from the thickest of the murky vapour, an infernal form burst into the centre of the room. If shape may be assimilated to what had no distinct form, a vast black, erect bear, had most resembled its figure: from the yawning cavern of its mouth, armed with sharp tusks of enormous magnitude, hung a huge red triform tongue; its eyes glared like two angry comets, and its uplifted fangs burnt with glowing fire. With impetuous fury it rushed to the hapless boy, and in a voice

of

of thunder exclaimed; What want'st thou? Thou hast called me, I am here.

Benedetto lay panic-struck and speechless behind the altar.

Once again with horrid howl the monster reiterated; What want'st thou with me?

The soul of the terrified child seemed to have deserted its mansion.

Take that reward for dragging me from the friendly gloom of Hell to the abhorred beams of day, yelled the fearful form, and infixing his fangs in the tender neck of the sweet boy, strangled him. The burning talons hissed in the pure blood, the close compression stopt respiration, his rosy cheeks assumed the purple of death, and the gates of sight closed on his eyes for ever.

With

With the same fury as he had entered,
the monster rushed out of the window.

It was mid-day before Pietro returned with Francesco, from his devotions. Accustomed to be met with caresses at the door by his affectionate child, the old man was surprised to see no signs of his unfortunate nephew. He enquired for him with anxious alarm, and was answered by an ancient servant, that he had perhaps fallen to sleep in the library, in which he had been shut up for some hours. I was afraid to look for him, Signor, said the man, trembling, for all, I am sure, is not right in the house: it has been so shaken, and filled with such strange noises, that I thought one stone would not have been left on another.--- Dreams, phantasms, replied Pietro;

but inwardly alarmed, he hastened with portentous apprehension to the library. As he opened the room the sulphurous vapour almost overpowered him ; but rushing forwards with precipitation, he found the secret door disclosed ; and then subdued by his terrors he staggered a few steps forwards, and fell headlong down the stairs. But raised above casualties which affected only himself, by his cares for his nephew, he cast a timid yet eager glance over the room ; and but too well convinced of his misfortune, fell without sense on the floor ; and Francesco sunk beside him.

Long lay their powers benumbed in deathlike insensibility ; slow was the return of life and perception to both. Dreading to raise his sight from the earth,

Pietro

Pietro stammered with a faint, feeble voice ; Francesco, lift up thy eyes, and tell me what thou seest.

Francesco looked round at this command, and replied, with hesitation, I see a window beaten out of its frame, the hands of the four kings without sceptres, the circles trodden down, and traces of burning claws on the tapestry.

Pietro. Seest thou nothing more ?

Francesco. I see the book of evocation open on the ground.

Pietro. Seest thou nothing more ?

Francesco. I see——oh that I had plucked out mine eyes 'ere they shewed me the tragic sight---I see Benedetto lying beside the altar, and in his ivory neck five deep wounds, whose lips seemed scorcht with fire, and have poured five

purple

purple streams on his lily bosom---I see, why does not the sun sicken at the piteous sight, and shroud his beams in nocturnal obscurity? The sweet boy's fingers twisted in the fretwork of the altar, and his teeth clinched with the agonies of death.

Pietro had again relapsed into insensibility; Francesco raised him from the floor and conveyed him to a couch. The motion recalled his fleeting sense. See'st thou nothing more, Francesco? cried he with a convulsive shudder: and then with rapid transition of passion exclaimed; who brought me here? Shall a homicide die on soft cushions? no, no, avenging Hell! be the rack or wheel my death bed, or lay me on the burning bull of Tartarus. Oh where is the body of him I have murdered? He started from his couch,

couch, and hurried to the fatal chamber, wound his arm about a pillar to support himself, and surveyed with steady gaze the altar. He approached the magic volume, cast his eye over the expanded page, and wrung with new agony, cried, yes, I am his murderer ! let men wreak their vengeance on my body, and demons employ all their infernal engines on my accursed soul. I am his murderer ! How came my hapless boy here ? I, I have dug the pit for him, and am his murderer. Why does not thy sweet face become a gorgon to me ? Why does not every drop of thy pure blood start up a devil to revenge thee ? The demon whom he unconsciously summoned, appeared ; Dirachiel, the fiercest fiend that ever sprang from the loins of Hell, or sucked

the

the venomous dugs of his dragon mother. He found the unsuspecting infant out of the circles, and seized the proffered occasion to destroy him. Yet 'twas I, accursed Dotard, that decoyed the innocent babe into the fangs of the demon. O Earth, entomb a miscreant that pollutes thy surface ! walls close upon me, and crush a monster, whose presence makes you curse the fast foundations that forbid your flight ! He said, and passion supplying force, beat down, and split to pieces the altar, trampled on the circles, broke the images, and tore the book of evocation. For a few instants he stood mute and motionless, and then collecting the fragments of the crosses, images, and altar, into a pile, he hurried out of the room ; but overpowered by the excess
of

of feeling, sunk motionless on the stairs, where he was found by Francesco, who bore him a second time to his chamber. Overstrained emotion raised a fever in Pietro's brain, his reason and memory yielded to the errors of a delirious imagination. He raved of empires, which he had to distribute, of planets to reform, and suns to relume ; of conferences where he was to assist with Angels, of the last unction which he must administer to a dying saint, of testimony he must bear against two devils for the murder of an innocent. The violence of passion wrung a deadly damp from his body ; he conceived himself already without life ; the canopy which hung over him seemed a dim vault, his couch a bier ; the coverlit appeared a pall, and every the slightest

noise sounded to him like the last trumpet. He whispered to Francesco, as if afraid the wall should hear ; I had once a nephew ! a little wanton laughing boy ; the crutch of my age and prop of my happiness. I lost him ; Angels saw his sportive innocence, and took him to themselves for a playfellow. See, there he stands near the Redeemer in a shining raiment, and bears the effulgent casque of Omnipotence. Ha ! I lie, I lie ! see the blood streaming from his mangled neck ! Can the endearments of angels leave vestiges thus ruinous ? No, they are prints of Hell's footsteps. Hark ! heard you that cry of sorrow ? Benedetto's parents stretch their wasted arms from the grave, and require their child from me. Ah say not I have murdered him. He

then

then sunk into the bed, hid his face beneath the cloaths, and lay breathless and panting, as if in dread of instant detection.

His horror and remorse endured for hours in the extremity of tumultuous perturbation ; they then sunk into more silent anguish. He lay quiet, and at times raised his folded hands to Heaven as if supplicating mercy ; but instantly snatching them asunder, he would cry ; I cannot silence the voice of blood ! Heaven has no ears for murderers ! He appeared to slumber ; but his heart echoed every sigh of Francesco with sobs of attrition and groans of anguish : he seemed consoled and resigned ; but remorse and despair weighed upon his soul like a burning mountain. Thus he lay till midnight ; when rising from his bed he

bade Francesco follow him, and stept lightly to the secret chamber with an apparent composure which might have deceived the most penetrating observer, and persuaded the most skilful physician that reason had regained its seat in his soul. Assisted by Francesco, he conveyed all his books of necromancy, and magical apparatus, into the garden, and formed them into a kind of funereal pile. Then seising an unlighted torch, he held it to the moon, as if he would kindle it by the pure beams of that luminary ; moved it about to fan the imaginary flame, and at length applied it to the pile. Francesco stood opposite to him in fearful expectation and dumb grief.

For some moments the old man preserved a silence that indicated a mind
fraught

fraught with woe, and then exclaimed,
 The accursed engines of my misery
 kindle and blaze ; thy face, Francesco,
 reflects the glowing flames, which to me
 are a foretaste of the hell prepared for
 my spirit. Bury my crime, as in a
 grave, from the knowledge of men, lest
 its putrid effluvia corrupt the race ; hide
 it from thy own eyes, lest they grow
 callous to atrocity. Let the sable pall
 of night shroud the nefarious act, which
 had hurled me from Heaven, were I an
 Angel. Was it not my crime that peopled
 Hell with the supernal progeny ? Dis-
 satisfied with the choicest of mortal blef-
 sings, I must stretch forth a rapacious
 hand to the sceptre of Omnipotence. Im-
 pious error ! to think that an infirm arm,
 trembling under a common burthen,

could regulate the motion of the spheres, and turn the earth on its axis, subdue to my will the inflexible laws of nature, and reverse the decrees of Providence. Oh, unheard of insolence ! Hell had excuses for its aspiring ambition : but a step below the Divinity, to risk that step was pardonable presumption. But I, far from Angels as the centre from the firmament, to strive with mad rebellion to wrest his dominion from the All-powerful ! I, the dust-born, and dust-returning reptile, to lust for the attributes of Omnipotence ! Impious thirst of aggrandisement and superiority ! thou hast transformed seraphim to demons, and made me a murderer. Ha ! Heaven's tribunal sits ; my name is denounced by the accusing spirit ; and avenging Hell rears its burning stake

stake for me. Guilty ! guilty ! all seeing
Judge ! drag me from the bar of Justice.

Again he died under the oppression of
feeling, and sunk nerveless on the
ground. Francesco judging him gone
for ever, bore him on his shoulders,
scarcely conscious what he did, to the
fatal chamber, and laid him beside the
corpse of Benedetto.

A stillness like that of a deluged land
reigned despotic in the house. On the
two remaining inhabitants fear lay like an
incubus, and conjured up terrific spec-
tres in their minds. The old servant shut
himself up, to wait in prayer a conclu-
sion to the mysterious tumult that per-
vaded the house ; and Francesco lighted
up as many tapers as he could collect, to
counterfeit day, and illuminate the horrid

night that surrounded him. Oft he would have gone to Enemonde; but shuddered to trust himself through the thick obscurity.

Soon as the new-born day had unclosed its eyes, and laughed jocund at its parent luminary, Francesco left the corner, in which, encircled with chairs and tables, he had passed the night, and treading cautiously to the secret apartment, saw with surprise Pietro kneeling beside the corpse of Benedetto, and striving to revive it with kisses. Oft the miserable old man laid his ear to the breathless lips; oft placed his hand to the heart, which was never more to know pulsation. Then he rose, trod back a few steps, observed the body with anxious attention, and fancying signs of life, ran back,

back, attempting to close the gaping wounds, and warm the child's icy hands in his bosom. Suddenly perceiving Francesco, he cried in a voice that had stopt the uplifted arm of death, Help me to recall life, and thine be all I have.

Sobs were the only answer.

Pietro. Then thou believest his soul irrevocably gone, and think'st me his murderer ?

Francesco. Not you, alas, but a demon.

Pietro. Who threw him into the fangs of the fiend ? say, if thou canst, Pietro did not. Who led him into a laboratory where every phial contained poison ? say, Pietro did not. Who inveigled him into a snare, where Hell lay in ambush ? say, Pietro did not, or dash to the earth

the

the chill cup of consolation. Oh ! that I was to receive such dreadful certainty of what my reason ever doubted, that bare words, oft without significance, could enforce the presence of demons!— Oh ! Benedetto, Benedetto ! martyr of this accursed truth, my blood, marrow and brains, shall melt into tears for thee.....

..... Hold me not, Francesco ; let go my arm, nor obstruct my purpose. I will run into the high-ways and market-places, call together the people, and confess myself a sorcerer, and the murderer of my nephew. Let go, I say. Many are there, who, like me, tempt the Omnipotent by snatching at his red thunders : I will warn them ; I will cry ; Hark, you are loosing a fiend from the pit

pit of woe, to destroy your children.—
Let me do the only good which yet de-
pends on me.

Francesco. My father, I cannot, will
not, leave you. Would you rush into
the flames which the envious monks
have long been kindling for you ?

Pietro. O just, right ! In the flames
should he expire, who has ransacked the
bowels of Hell for poisons, and thrown
them in the way of children.

Francesco. And me, too, would you
murder ?

Pietro. Murder you ?—Oh no, no !

Francesco. Me, your scholar, your
friend, your kinsman, would not the
sanguinary monks cast into the cruel
flames with you ?

Pietro. Murder !—Oh ! expunge the
accursed word from thy remembrance.—

No : seek expressions that may sound like it, for all thy wants and feelings ; that thy questions and answers, thy entreaties and thanksgivings, may torture me to death. When thou salutest me, call me, my child's murderer. When thou will flatter and propitiate me, name me my child's murderer. O God, O God ! do human hearts take so much breaking, or dost thou love to protract and sport with our miseries ? Do not weep, good cousin, I will not murder either thee or myself ; and a tear of pity would be scalding lead to me. To preserve my life shall be my most sacred duty ; to maintain my health in full vigour, that my sense of my guilt may be perfect, and remorse unabated. So shall I prepare myself for Hell, and anticipate that

that world of wailing, where no ray of heavenly grace finds admittance.

Francesco. Oh, think not of it, my father ! Will not an erected church expiate the most flagitious actions ?

Pietro. Will a grain of musk sweeten the lake of Sodom ? Never, never ! The exiled angels shall find mercy ; but I never shall. The balmy accents of pardon shall sound eternal bliss to princes, who have slain millions of their people to encrease their empire ; to the seducers of innocent girls, who bring the victims of their voluptuous appetites to infamy, prostitution and suicide ; the dews of celestial grace shall spread to all the tyrants of the earth ; to the great murderer of the innocents ; to the wretches who blasphemed their Saviour,
and

and crucified their God ; to all these, all-gracious Heaven shall open his arms ; but to me, never : from the general act of grace I alone am excepted. When new worlds shall have risen and decayed, when new suns have been illumined and burnt out, my tortures shall continue still fresh and unexhausted.

Francesco. Gracious Heaven, be merciful to us !

Pietro. Never, never !—Ha ! look there—See how the blood runs afresh, to write me murderer ! Does not every opening wound proclaim me murderer ?

Francesco. All gracious Heaven, have mercy on us !

Pietro. Nay ; seest thou not warm, living blood, trickle down from the chasms I have made in the sweetest work
of

of nature?—See there a drop, and there,
and there—

Francesco. My father, passion imposes
on your credulous fancy; there are no
such realities as your distempered brain
presents to you.

Pietro. Thank thee, thank thee, kind
Francesco! Thou weepest with me, and
shakest in my arms, as if thyself hadst
murdered him.

Francesco. Oh! I have murdered him.

Pietro. Thou?

Francesco. Why did I ever quit him!

Pietro. No; I only have done the
deed of horror. Wasn't not I, who built
a kennel for the fiend that worried him?
Ha! am not I in the den of perpetration?
And is not the air poison to me? Where
are all the implements of his perdition,
and

and mine ? All is empty as a new-made grave.---Has the humane earth, in pity to her children, entombed the deadly weapons?---Where is the accursed volume?---Where is the infernal altar?---Where—

Francesco. You conveyed all, last night, into the garden, and laid them in a heap together.

Pietro. Did I do that ? Remembrance took no note of it. I feel a chasm in my mind, where all is void between the first shock of this freezing discovery, and my waking beside the body of my poor Benedetto. Well has delirium supplied the office of reason ! Hence to the garden, and let devouring flames consume these infernal engines of his and my perdition.

All

All his powers, collected for this last occasion, left no appearance of age or debility in the old man, who acted with all the alacrity of youthful vigour. He ran to the hearth, snatched a brand from the fire, and rushed with Francesco to the garden. In a moment, the pile was wrapt in fierce flames, that soon reduced it to a heap of dead ashes. During this, his tortures had appeared suspended, and his mind to have recovered some serenity ; but as the flames expired, remorse resumed her stern empire over him ; and he exclaimed, in a tone of frantic despair, I will strew these glowing ashes on my head ! I will mingle them with my tears, in the cup which consolation reaches to me, and drink them off, to my perdition. Ah ! could they re-

store my Benedetto, I would heap burning afflictions on my head, and drown myself in a sea of sorrows.—Ah ! nothing, nothing can revive him ! nothing can absolve me from the guilt of the abhorred deed ; no penances, no atonements. And ought a murderer to wish for mercy ? No ; let Hell crush me with its whole weight of vengeance, and every race of men heap curses on my head. In the church of St. Oliveta, a tomb shall be erected to Benedetto, on which, when Hell shall have taken me to itself, let the tale of my horrid act be inscribed ; and let the bones of the murderer moulder at the feet of his unhappy victim. Not that thereby eternal mercy may extend to my spirit, or that the prayers which are showered on him, may

descend on me; but that almighty justice may be reminded of my crime, and that no charitable pilgrim may pass over my grave, without adding a curse to the accumulated damnation that presses upon me.

Drooping and exhausted, at length, Pietro collected the ashes, and bore them to his chamber. The corpse of Benedetto he filled with the most precious spices, and cloathed it in a robe of white and silver. On the second day, it was interred in the church of St. Oliveta; and a perennial mass was established for the repose of the spirit.

All that Pietro had suffered previous to the interment of Benedetto, seemed to have been but the symptoms of what he endured afterwards: his perturbation

M 2 then

then was comparatively relieved by his bursts and explosions of reproach and indignation. Now held down by his weariness and imbecility, rent and bursting with the imprisoned agonies of remorse and attrition, his whole soul was fixed on two images---his Benedetto floating in all the extacies of Heaven---himself writhing in the torments of extinguishable Hell, and baited by relentless demons. He could not weep, nor sob, nor sigh: nature, at the last ebb, wanted strength to free itself from its pains by any channel. Abstracted from every thing around him, he was alive only to the stings of remorse, which he cherished as the sole expiation of his crime, and which he hoped might mitigate, though it could not revoke, the sentence of everlasting misery.

The

The day after Benedetto's burial, the unhappy Pietro confessed himself to the Abbot of St. Oliveta, and received absolution of his sins, but distrusted its efficacy: his guilt seemed to him of so deep a dye, that not all the fires of purgatory could bleach him; of so horrid a hue, that Heavenly mercy must stop short, and shrink from it. He obtained from the Abbot permission to be interred at the feet of Benedetto, and to have their sad history engraved on their sepulchre. For this, he devised the tenth of his property to the monastery, and bequeathed the residue to Francesco. Contented on these two points, the miserable Pietro grew more composed; he ordered himself to be borne in his couch to the library, and placed before

the crucifix, on which he kept his eyes ever fixed, entreating from it some signal of Heaven's mercy. He took neither nourishment nor medicine ; never turned his look from the image, nor opened his close-compressed lips, but to ask some sign of salvation.

Could the two most mortal opposites of nature, Life and Death, ever be united, they might be accounted so in Pietro. His body lay senseless and motionless as marble, the mere tomb of his spirit. No motion, nor convulsive shiver of the limbs, indicated the presence even of distempered animation : no vital heat was perceptible to the most exquisite touch ; the keenest eye could discern no marks of respiration. Death had benumbed all the extremities, and carried

carried on his approaches to the citadel of life. At the heart, Pietro's powers made a last stand.—Here he felt a revulsion, which at once gave him assurance of life, and notice of instant extinction. Death menaced every moment to quench the last spark of animation.

On the third day, a sleepy torpor (the short flights of the soul, preparatory to her final departure) closed, sometimes for hours, the eye-lids of the woe-worn Pietro. His awaking was indicated only by a slow and languid elevation of his eyes, and by a feeble, half-supprest cry of, A sign, image of my Redeemer ! a sign that my sins are forgiven me ! The loudest noise could make no impression on his ears ; his eyes saw no object but the crucifix, which would have appeared to them, though it had been no longer

actually present. Towards evening, as he revived from a state between a doze and a trance, and re-commenced his faint, but earnest supplication for some token of divine mercy, the wooden image thrice inclined its head. The last breath of Pietro's life, which had waited but for this blessing, exhaled in a transport of joy.---He exclaimed, God has forgiven me!---and closed his eyes for ever.

His corpse was deposited in the church of St. Oliveta, beside his beloved Benedetto. A superb monument was erected over their grave, on which their dreadful catastrophe was inscribed as a warning to posterity.*

* Swinburne saw the stone in 1777.—Vide Swinburne's Journey through both the Sicilies, from the Year 1777 to 1780, Vol. III.

Already

Already had experience taught Francesco, that the enjoyment of riches was at some distance from the possession of them. Ever since the death of Benedetto, he had been the virtual possessor of Pietro's property ; and yet he had not once dared to indulge himself with the sight of his Enemonde. He was compelled to watch over his wealth, like a dragon over subterranean gold, Never durst he leave the bed of his dying kinsman, lest the cowled legacy-hunters, who crowded about a sick man like crows round distempered cattle, should come between him and his expectations, and intercept his inheritance, He durst not, in the presence of his expiring relative, manifest the smallest sign of the inward satisfaction and triumph
with,

with which the prospect of independence inspired him, left the offended pride of the testator might instigate him to revoke his act in the youth's favour, and, by too early a seizure of his prey, he might lose it for ever. Scarcely was Pietro immured in the tomb, ere Francesco burst, like a spring long held back from its proper bent, from the dreary constraint in which he had been retained, and ran to his lovely girl; his bosom swelling with exultation, and his eyes flashing with the flame of joy, as the summer sky with playful lightnings.

As if a wall, that reached from earth to heaven, had been removed from between them; as if both had just disengaged themselves from vows of eternal chastity; as if each had escaped the hands

hands of the executioner, Francesco and Enemonde rushed into each other's arms. As if on that point only where they stood, was vital air to be inhaled ; as if on that point only was earth below, and heaven above, they stood there, fixed and immovable. As if they feared that, at any the smalleſt interſtice, misfortune ſhould inſert his flaming ſword, to diſdivide them, or place immeaſurable waſtes between their meeting, they stood close conjoined, and inseparable as plates of marble. Words ſeemed too mean a drefs for their emotions of exultation, too incompetent repreſentatives of their tranſports, too dim a medium to convey their ſentiments. Looks and ſighs, close embraces and warm kiſſes, extatic muſſums and fervent carefſes, are the rhe-
toric

toric of love; and, with all these tropes at their command, they were at no loss to express their mutual rapture.

Long held their joy, ere words were thought of; and when they recurred to them, 'twas but at intervals, when a solitary monosyllable would steal out mid a croud of kisses. My! thy! dear youth! sweet girl! were alone employed, till doubt brought into play its---Can it be? is it possible? And finally, when joy grew less loud and riotous, Enemonde in melting accents asked; And art thou indeed mine, my beloved? And Francesco replied, in a voice of rapture; I am indeed thine, my beloved? This made way for further discourse, and restored their lips to the use of language,

Enemonde,

Enemonde. And thou art really mine, joy of my life? once more assure me that thou art, and confirm my felicity. Is every impediment removed? Does fortune no longer withhold her consent to our union?

Francesco. Every obstruction is levelled with the ground, every chain is loosed from us. I am thine, thou mine, as sure as joy is in thy arms, or misery without them. Iron chests crammed with gold are mine, are thine; fields and vineyards are mine, and thine; all that can banish care, or fix pleasure, belongs to me and to thee, source and partner of my happiness!

Enemonde. Welcome, fortune, thy gifts! since love is in their retinue. All are dear to me, but as the vehicle of my

Francesco.

Francesco. Was ever girl so blessed as I! riches in reserve, youth and health in my frame, virtue in my heart, and my beloved in my arms, what is wanting to my felicity? and yet a chilling damp pervades my frame, and every pulsation of thy high strung heart against my bosom, is to mine the stroke of a dagger.

Francesco. What means this dark foreboding? But may not the rarefaction of sudden and extreme joy strain and tear the mind, as conduits are burst by the vernal dissolution of the long frozen water? Thou hast not dared to credit the reports that spread of thine and my good fortune, and doubts still combat within thee against thy belief that I am heir to Pietro's opulence? Thou canst not trust thy

senses,

senses, when they assure thee of so much happiness ?

Enemonde. How is it possible I should believe that my wishes are so amply, so speedily accomplished ?

Francesco. They are. Thou art mine, and I thine, till death shall divorce us.

Enemonde. Oh yes, yes ! thy kisses certify me of it.

Francesco. Let me imprint certainty on thy heart; on thy hesitating heart, that still heaves dubious in thy swelling bosom.

Enemonde. Stay thy licentious hand, dear youth ! Expansive joy may be too lavish of her treasures.

Francesco. Too lavish to thy bride-groom ? Can the house be too free to its master ?

master? Art thou not my bride, and dost thou fear a thief in thy husband?

Enemonde. Remember, though thy bride, I am not thy wife; and the shrine of modesty may be approached but by the husband. Thy lips may speak thy love to me in every form of blandishment; mine shall answer them with kisses; but let my bosom be sacred and inviolate. Some secrets must be unveiled by the god of marriage; others even he should leave in mystery; and to the woman, who has left all her modesty at the altar, the nuptial benediction shall be converted into a curse that will destroy her hymeneal felicity. What as a bride I may grant thee, I freely bestow; but let us not strip marriage of its harvest, by reaping

its

its joys in the blade. What we bestow on our lovers, is stolen from our husbands.

Francesco. Oh, let me enjoy as both ! have not I deserved all that love and hymen can afford me ?

Enemonde. Oh, doubtless ! thou hast merited every thing.

Francesco. Indeed I have. Didst thou but know, Enemonde, what I have atchieved since I saw thee !

Enemonde. I dare swear, the labours of Hercules.

Francesco. Little less, believe me.

Enemonde. I can imagine them. Thou hast strained dry eyes for tears, when observation was on thee ; thou hast laboured to heave up sighs of compassion, when all beat high and triumphant within thee. When thou besoughtest heaven for the

recovery of Pietro with thy tongue, thy heart prayed for the possession of Enemonde. Both thy wishes were not gratified; and what so painful as ungratified wishes? When Pietro slept, you watched; when he waked, you sighed; poor youth! when has sleep composed thy weary eyelids? Appearances confirm my conjectures. Fasting and prayers have faded thy rosy cheek, and macerated thy plump visage. Ah, hypocrite! never wert thou so lovely! love has flushed thy complexion with his finest purple, and my every glance brings home fresh fuel to my passion. Cease to stifle me with kisses! ah, remove those burning hands from my bosom!

Francesco. Ha! say'st thou burning hands?

Enemonde.

Enemonde. I do not much depend on thy piety, Francesco ; I fear the church will not gain much in thee. Thou wilt erect few altars ; thou wilt not found many cloisters.

Francesco. Oh but I will, I will !

Enemonde. Really ? and for once, his blessings shall remind man of his creator ? But what comes to you ? You are not angry ? forgive my raillery, dearest youth, and kiss me the kiss of forgiveness—not so, Francesco, my lips, not my bosom, were guilty ; let them then bear the punishment, or receive the pardon.

Francesco. Why, cruel girl, dost thou exclude me from the elysium of love ? I have swum through the nine belts of

Styx to arrive at it ? ah, too well have I
bought admission !

Enemonde. Francesco, repeat it once
again, and I will shut myself from thee,
till thou leadest me to the altar.—Thy
blood is liquid fire.

Francesco. And thine, congealed water,
After what I have ventured for thee, to
meet these shrinking apprehensions ! Oh,
Enemonde, didst thou but know what
I have done for thee, thou wouldest think
no sacrifice too great for me.

Enemonde. Instruct me in these mighty
efforts, that I may reward them as
they merit, if it be in my power to do
so.

Francesco. Wilt thou reward them as
wilt thou ?

Enemonde.

Enemonde. Should I find them worthy
of such a recompence.

Francesco. Dost thou esteem it nothing,
to have retained my reason in the whirl-
wind of passion, when thou saidst, I must
languish through eternal years, ere in thy
arms I completed my happiness. Was
it nothing to stay the uplifted dagger of
suicide, and consent to bear the load of
life for thee?

Enemonde. Deduct from that merit all
that is due to self love, and what shall I
be thy debtor?

Francesco. Dost thou reckon it no-
thing, to have retired, gnawn by jealousy,
into the habitation of torporific tedious-
ness, and to have sworn never to be-
come thy husband during the life of
Benedetto?

Enemonde. Art thou insane, Francesco? thou couldst not have forsworn the possession of me.

Francesco. May you never be mine, if I did not! I confessed my passion for thee to Pietro, and laboured to win from his liberality a nuptial present, that might set us above the restraints of poverty. He raged, as if I had revealed to him a sacrilege: he threatened to expel me from his house, to make Benedetto a monk, and to bequeath his treasures to a monastery: he deafened me with reproaches of my ingratitude, rent my heart with lamentations of his miserable destiny, and so staggered my understanding, that I besought pardon, and received it only on condition of this oath, which was followed by another, from the observance

of which his death has released me. On this, he led me to a secret apartment, unveiled a magical apparatus, promised me dominion over the spirits of the higher and nether worlds, and engaged to initiate me in all the mysteries of necromancy. The life of Benedetto now stood between thee and me; my soul was lost in all the agitation of jealousy, and I wandered about like an unhappy exile far from all that was dear to me. In the full hurricane of passion I met Horatio, and saw in his cap one of the violet gloves which I gave thee. Was it nothing, to refrain from murdering him, who bore thus in triumph a pledge of thy preference?

Enemonde. Oh, the presumption of jealousy, that sport of every delusion.

conceives its every conjecture infallible, its every inference unerring ! this glove on which, not an hour since, I was employed, is the fellow to that thou saw'st in the cap of Horatio.

Francesco. To this, to this, dear perfidious, which since that morn, I have ever borne next my heart.

Enemonde. And of which behold the true companion. Have I detected my thief at last ? depend on a punishment for thy offence, thou spoiler. I have sought for it, as for a jewel dropt in long grass. But see, is this, think you, a glove for my arm ? look, thou dupe of jealousy, how close it clings to my hand, and fits like a skin to my fingers ? Canst thou not guess it was made for the lusty arm and full fingers of Horatio's mother.

The

The countess loves embroidered gloves,
and Horatio requested me to work a pair
for her to her fancy ; I consented ; his
impatience snatcht from me the first
finished glove, ere its companion was
completed, and in sportive gallantry he
placed it in his cap. Well mayst thou
blush at thy injurious suspicions ! now
boast that thou hast not murdered the
knight ; now vaunt thy matchless vic-
tories over passion, thou slave to jea-
lousy !

Francesco. Not so fast, Enemonde ;
now at least I will state a service that de-
mands every acknowledgement. Having
shaken off the demon of jealousy, I flew
to father Hilario, and enquired of him
if mortal citations could constrain spirits ;
and he answered in the negative. Do

you

you see no merit in refraining to murder Pietro, the hoary impostor, who had defrauded me of my only treasure, my precious Enemonde ?

Enemonde. Why didst thou refrain ? that the sword of avenging justice might not separate thee from me for ever. Canst thou call it virtue, to have desisted from a crime, which must have ruined thy soul's hopes, and counteracted thy first purpose. Magnanimous Sampson ! thou wouldest not pull down ruin on thy lord, lest thou should'st be crushed with him.

Francesco. Not so fast, fair one. Penances, mortifications, and prayer were to adapt me for the great work of summoning spirits. So Pietro directed ; and I acquiesced, curious to learn how far the

the old liar would proceed with his deception. In the church of St. Oliveta I knelt till my limbs were benumbed to stone, and spun out my soul in prayers, that God would render that true, which sound reason declared impossible. Fired at length, I rose, slid from the side of Pietro, who absorbed in his empty projects, was as senseless to every thing else as one of the wooden angels that support the altar, walked round the church, and leaning my ear to a confessional box, heard the avowal of a penitent, who accused himself of incontinence with a certain Enemonde. As he turned his head, he appeared to me like Horatio.

Enemonde. Let my face plead to the arraignment. How says it; guilty or not guilty?

Francesco.

Francesco. Nor guilt, nor shame have power to change a feature of it.

Enemonde. Account that a competent witness, where long practice of crime has not rendered the soul callous to accusation; where notorious depravity has not hardened the features to detection. Whether Orsalini was the penitent that thou hast overheard, let this letter to my father inform thee.

She gave a paper to Francesco, who hastily unfolded it, and read:

“ *Castle of Orsalini, St. Luke’s day.*

“ I have already ordered my horse
“ for my journey to the Prince of Haute-
“ ville, with whom my first business
“ shall be to procure a provision for the
“ good Coroaldi. Before the close of a
“ month

" month I hope to bring him in person
 " an assurance of it. Before then I do
 " not expect to revisit Salerno.

Horatio Orsalini.

Enemonde. This is dated previous to the time when this suspicious incident took place. Dost thou give up the veracity of thy eyes, which inform thee of such fallacies,

Francesco. Grant I do, I retain credit for my hearing, which too plainly witnessed Benedetto's declarations that thy kiss was *so sweet* to him, and that thy touch *so tbrilled* him.

Enemonde. Heaven keep thee in thy senses ! thou wilt be jealous of my waiting woman, if thou canst fancy a child thy rival,

Francesco.

Francesco. Let me proceed, I beseech you. Thy possession was to be obtained but by a desperate act, and to that I strained all my faculties, and goaded on my resolution.

Enemonde. Nothing less, I suppose, than my murder?

Francesco. That stroke I reserved in case of your perfidy. I found by chance, or rather love led me to the discovery, an old bear's-skin, which had probably been used by some scholar of Barliardo, at a carnival; an old monk deeply versed in chymistry had taught me to make fireworks, which should emit thick smoke, cast balls of flame, and make loud explosions.

Enemonde. Francesco, what possesses thee? I fear excessive joy has deranged

thy senses. Or wilt thou seriously and soberly persuade me, that I should recompence thee for pilfering orchards, or frightening old women?—Let us adjourn this subject to another occasion.

Francesco. I loosed from its frame one of the windows of the mysterious chamber which looks into the garden, but left it apparently firm in its station: I opened the magic volume in a part which contained an invocation to an infernal spirit—

Enemonde. Art thou intoxicated or delirious? Let me go, *Francesco*, I have much of my household business to mind.

Francesco. Dost thou fear already, that thy contempt for my merits was premature? No, fair one, thou shall stay to do me justice, Depending on *Benedetto's* curiosity

curiosity for the success of my design, I opened the pannel, which conceals the door leading to the secret apartment, in such a manner, that the most inattentive eye must have remarked it. When we were at mass, Benedetto was accustomed to amuse himself in the library. On the fifth morning of my preparation this was performed, when stealing unobserved by Pietro, from the church, I cloathed myself in the bear's-skin, and having provided all my implements, concealed myself in the garden under the loosened window—

Enemonde. To what tends all this idle farce, Francesco?

Francesco. Justly had I reasoned on the boy's curiosity; it drew him into the mysterious room, and to the altar; where

he read the open page of the magic volume. While he was thus employed, I flung a firework into the apartment, which filled it with thick vapour; then forcing in the window with a violent crash, I rushed in, and finding him in a swoon, strangled him with a pair of red hot pincers.

Enemonde tore herself from the arms of *Francesco*, and flew to the tabernacle for protection as if a demon pursued her. For some minutes she hid her face in the cover of the altar; at length raising her head, she exclaimed; and is it then true? What? cried *Francesco*, with alarm and agitation.

Enemonde. That joy can be so near a kin to madness?

O

Francesco.

Francesco. Thus was I liberated from my oath, was the future heir of Pietro, and thy husband. Was there any other road open to me? Were there any other means in nature, to liberate me from the slavery into which the old deceiver had decoyed me? Had I murdered the boy in any other way, suspicion of the fact must have fallen on me, and instead of reaching happiness in thy arms, I had rushed upon an infamous death on the scaffold. But now the suspicious vigilance, even of the priesthood, is baffled; for before what tribunal can they cite a demon?

Enemonde. Francesco, art thou really sober?

Francesco. Can intoxication preserve such coherence? I threw off my disguise, returned

returned to the church, and thence with Barliardo to his mansion. What had happened was soon revealed to him, and his distempered imagination laid him open to my delusion. He fancied the boy had unconsciously summoned a fiend, who finding him without the circles had strangled him. He called himself Benedetto's murderer, raved and wept, and gave himself up to remorse and despair, till nature no longer sufficed to his efforts, and he sunk into languor and despondency. He lay motionless before the crucifix, and spent his last forces in asking a sign of heavenly forgiveness. My soft weakness at length moved me to compassion for the old swindler, who would have given me a book filled with falsehood and jargon as

O 2 a recompence

a recompence for the loss of thy living and substantial treasures; I mounted within the hollow image while he was in a doze, and moved its head thrice as he awoke. Pacified with this pledge of salvation, he loosed his hold to life, and his soul took its flight to Hell or Heaven.

Enemonde. Strange, that delight should operate so upon our senses! May I own, without exciting thy laughter, Francesco, that thy love accents knell in my ears as if thou had'st murdered the good Pietro, and Benedetto, the sweetest boy that ever gamboled over the face of nature.

Francesco. Thy ears are faithful interpreters: I have murdered both; but 'twas to obtain thee.

Enemonde.

Enemonde. Then my eyes must be false intelligencers. Thou hast related to me a tale that makes every particle of my frame crawl within me, and methinks thy countenance has lost nothing of its serenity. Thy eye balls do not start from their sockets, nor do thy hairs rise like disturbed serpents.

Francesco. The retrospect of the deed leaves me as cool as eve, and composed as the ocean, when its mad tempests give place to halcyon calms. But when it was brewing in my inmost heart, while the nucleus was completing like a gathering cancer in my bosom; while tost on a sea of passion, now hope raised me to Heaven and now jealousy funk me to the centre; then was my whole frame shaken as with an earthquake, and the

scirocco of Tartarus seemed to breathe on my soul. I inhaled burning sulphur, and hot lava ran in my veins.

Enemonde. Prove thyself a liar, I conjure thee, Francesco.

Francesco. Then must I prove truth a perjury. A raging fire inflamed my blood, when I found the fatal skin; it seemed as though the infernal deed was written in phosphorus on every wall around me; and when I strangled the artless boy, and the fiery pincers hissed in his neck, the furnace of Hell seemed to blaze around me. But, oh, such an ague of the soul followed this fever! a chillness seized me, that congealed my blood, and benumbed all my sinews. When lamenting over his nephew's body, Pietro accused himself of the crime I had perpetrated;

perpetrated ; when he exclaimed that all sinners should find mercy but the murderer of Benedetto ; when he fancied the wounds bled afresh, and, infected by the contagious phrensy, my eyes confirmed the delusion, and a full confession of my guilt was bursting impetuous from my lips ; then, Enemonde, a rigid frost crept on me that would have wrung a recantation of their faith from the first christians, who with unshrinking fortitude sustained all the rage of fire, and mocked the searching knife of their executioners : and into this furnace of intolerable fever, into this ice-pit of gripping frost, I have cast myself, to win thee. For thee, Enemonde, I murdered the innocent Benedetto ; for thee I have exiled myself from Heaven, and incurred cer-

O 4 tain

tain perdition; and now say, if obduracy to conviction will permit thee, that I have not deserved all thou canst bestow on me.

Enemonde. If thou hast done this, if it can be true—

Francesco. Trifle not with my impatience! *I have* done it, 'tis true.

Enemonde. Then art thou the most execrable monster that ever Hell brought forth for the destruction of man.

Francesco. So be it! In thy arms I wait my regeneration to humanity.

Enemonde. If ever they enfold thee, may it be their eternal lot to fondle devils! Ha, shall I live under one roof with thee, thou murderer of innocence? Shall I kiss lips that spoke honied words to him, whose loved flower their breath had

had blasted ? Shall I suffer hands about my neck that have been embrued in the blood of the gentle Benedetto ? Cast me into the escargatory* of Hell, where crawl unnumbered toads and adders ; there let hunger whip me till I devour their poisonous flesh, and thirst scorch me till I lick the slime from their madid skins ; I will rather live an eternity in that den than one hour in thy arms.

Francesca. Enemonde, I hope, present surprise over-rules thy settled purpose, I hope, you remember your oath

* An escargatory is a magazine or nursery for snails frequent in monasteries, situate in inland countries, where the scarcity of fish reduces the religious, of both sexes, to feed during their solemn fasts on those reptiles.

to be mine, were I a mass of depravities and abominations.

Enemonde. Though that vow, which escaped me in the phrensy of passion, had reached the presence of God and hung perdition over me, I violate it. Did'st thou think, monster, the blood of innocence a grateful sacrifice to the heart of a woman. Did'st thou think, I would lull thee to sleep on my bosom? thee, whom the executioner and the wheel shall confign to damnation? Away, murderer! roll Alps and Apennines betwixt us; Almighty Heaven, place immensity between us! Away, wretch, for whom my tortured imagination can find no adequate term of abhorrence; away, nor infect the ambient air with thy poisons.

Francesco. Enemonde! listen to me, my beloved,

Enemonde.

Enemonde. My ears are henceforth deaf to thy blandishments, and thy love murmurs shall sound like the convulsive rattle of thy dying victim.

Francesco. Enemonde, I warn you drive me not to madness; my blood begins to boil with fury, and thou know'st I am fleshed to murder. Enemonde, cease thus to treat me! Have I not done all this to obtain thee? O thou ineffably my beloved, speak consent and consolation to me. Say thou art mine; art thou not the price of my perdition?

Enemonde. May an opened grave be my nuptial couch, a putrid corpse my bridegroom, sooner than thee; thou Gorgon to my sight! Hence, murder me not with thy aspect.

Francesco. Observe your oath, Enemonde! give me my recompence.

Enemonde.

Enemonde. No other recompence can I give thee than curses, contempt and eternal hatred. As sure—she snatched a knife from the table, and unloosing her long tresses, cut them off---as sure as these locks will never more adorn my head, so sure I enter into the most rigid cloister, there to expiate in severest penance the crime of having loved a monster that disgraces humanity.

Francesco. Ha, is this my recompence? But still I love thee, and thus I shorten thy sufferings.

He attempted to wrest the knife from her hands, but in vain: she threw it out of the window, and cried for help against murder, Francesco fled with precipitation.

As if the girl had revealed his guilt to the whole city, he ran affrighted and goaded

goaded by avenging furies through Salerno, rushed to the sea shore, mounted the highest summit of a chain of rocks, and flung himself headlong down. Where he should descend, consternation had left him no power to consider or enquire ; he fell on a shoal, that but just rose above the surface of the water. The vital parts remained uninjured from the fall, but a sharp angle of the rock, which grazed him in the descent, had torn his left cheek from the bone, which it had broken ; and both his legs and one arm were fractured. Death, into whose soft downy arms he meant to sink, had placed a bed of stone to receive him, strewn with tortures.

For some time Francesco's crushed frame lay void of life and feeling ; then

the trembling pulse recovered a feeble motion, sudden spasms shook his nerves, and his respiration prest laborious through his clenched teeth. He had been in a swoon of anguish, not of death, and his soul soon found itself alive under the ruins of its shattered hut. The refreshing breezes, which played on the water, brought him to himself, and enabled him to see and feel every pang his torturer had prepared for him. His first look was to his maimed limbs, where he saw his blood and marrow soaking through his vestments. Pain had infixed her viper tooth in the seat of sensibility, and insinuated her subtle venom. He sought to approach the edge of the rock, but could not stir himself; death had bound him for execution on a stage of torture
where

where he lay immovable. A burning fever, kindled by anguish, raged in his blood, to which the heat of the meridian sun, reflected from the rocks and water, gave additional violence.

In the green mirror that encompassed him he saw the wall of rocks reflected, that cut him off from the land ; he heard the waves dashing against their base, and the horrors of his situation opened on him. As the objects disengage themselves from darkness when the orient morn stands effulgent on the eastern hills, her starting place, the miserable, guilty Francesco, saw his deeds rise before him, and at first his too precipitate suicide appeared the most obnoxious of his offences. He lamented that he had left his dearly purchased wealth un-
enjoyed,

enjoyed, which had lured nymphs to his arms, before whose beauties the charms of Enemonde had veiled their diminished lustre in shame and envy, and who had richly consoled him for the loss of his ungrateful fair. Regret stimulated him to vain struggles for escape; loud were his cries for assistance, but none heard them: no vessel, however small, approached the dangerous shoal in which he had involved himself. Flies, wasps, and hornets swarmed about his battered visage, from which he had no means of driving them; inserted their fuckers into his torn flesh, and sated themselves with his blood and juices. The loose spray of the sea was cast over him by the breeze, and wherever the briny drops fell into his wounds, they gave a keener edge

edge to his torments. He cried to Heaven and to men for rescue ; justified and cursed his deed ; called Pietro and Orsalina his murderers ; besought the All-gracious to terminate his misery, to open an abyss beneath him, to draw down the rocks on his head. He strained his nerves by vain efforts, and stung with agony, cut new wounds in his flesh by useless struggles. The torrid sun blistered and peeled the skin from his face and neck ; and burning thirst seared his palate. He lay on the most excruciating engine, on which Hell ever martyred its victims, till the evening, and till the morning again ; without sleep, without any mitigation of his anguish, which redoubled with every fresh pang. His strength was annihilated, and did not

suffice to the faintest motion or groan. A cormorant lighted on him and ate out his eyes.

Towards the evening of the second day, the rising winds howled a note of comfort to the wretched sufferer; the sea curled into higher waves, and the distant thunder growled in hoarse murmurs. The miserable object of such accumulated tortures implored Heaven to bury him beneath the ocean, or to hurl its flaming bolts at his head. The tempest grew more obstreperous; the winds raised the waters mountains high, and hoisted them far over the rock, where lay the suffering sinner. One of the waves in its return bore his mangled body into the sea, and completed and terminated his punishment.

